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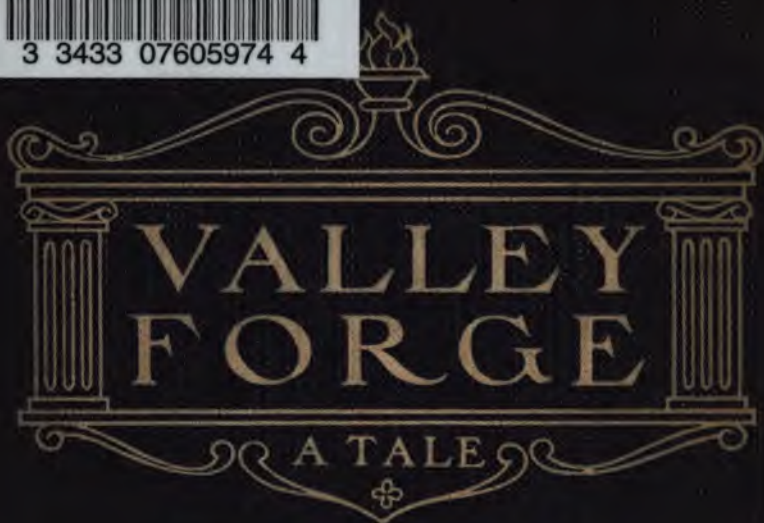
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# VALLEY FORGE

A TALE

ALDEN W. QUIMBY

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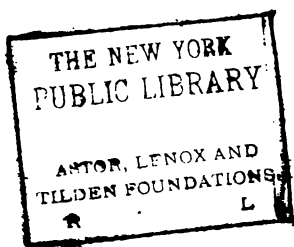
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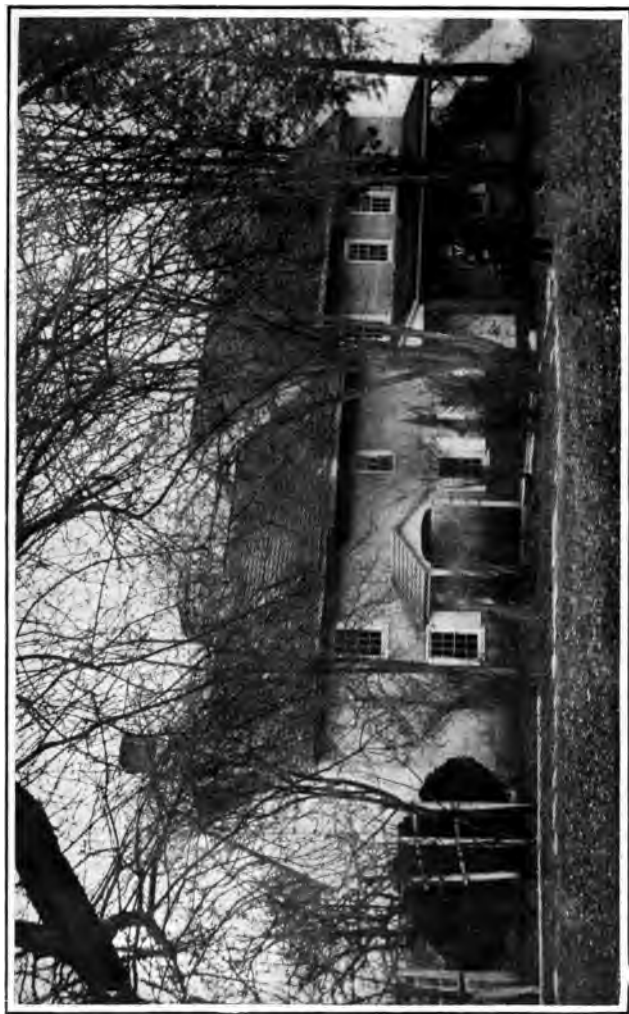


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HOME OF FRANCES JONES (HOWE'S HEADQUARTERS)

# VALLEY FORGE

A TALE

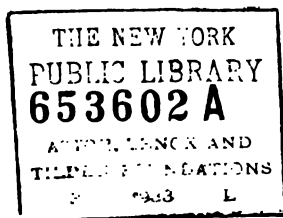
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## CHAPTER I

### MARS AND CUPID

It was a sunny Friday afternoon in the first fortnight of September, in the year of grace seventeen hundred and seventy-seven. The soft autumnal breeze that coquetted with the broad green leaves of Peggy Hambleton's ungainly but hospitable catalpas was born in the southwest, as the lazy weather-vane attached to the eastern gable of Neighbor Reese's barn, just across the way, plainly indicated. The idlers about the premises, who were more numerous than usual, noted the direction of the wind, and commented upon it ominously, regarding it as portentous of disagreeable events that were likely to have their inception in the southwest quarter.

Peggy's log cottage of a story and a half occupied the northeast angle of the (Old) Lancaster and Howelltown roads, in that portion of Tredyffrin Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania, which comprises the northern suburbs of the present village of Berwyn. The primitive structure faced toward the south, and overlooked a fine area of table land. The road from Howelltown crossed the Lancaster road, and continued to Newtown, and beyond. A mile south of Peggy's corner a branch led to the mill on Darby Creek and to Saint David's Church.

The ground to the north of the cottage sloped rapidly toward a ravine abutting on the Valley, in whose ferny recesses the waters flowing from a dozen springs mingled merrily, and tumbled over numberless tiny cascades on their way to Trout Creek and the Schuylkill.

One could almost look into the open door of the gleaming white cottage of James and Mary Neilley, near the head of the ravine, and into that of William Downey on the knoll above, as well; and could make himself heard without much effort at Balsam Ringer's, on the hill to the right.

Looking eastward along the Lancaster road, which traversed the ridge known as the South Valley Hill, one saw a straggling hamlet reaching for a full quarter mile to Squire Henny Bell's, where was dispensed not only law, but also the ordinary commodities of a country store. It were as well not to preserve the popular but vulgar caption of the incipient village—at a somewhat later period it became known as "Reeseville."

Miss Peggy Hambleton, with her buxom assistant, Miss Nancy Mawhort, brewed such seductive beer, and baked such tempting cakes, that they never had cause to pine for patronage. Teamsters and travelers paused at the humble cake-shop for refreshment; and certain men of the vicinage found such attraction in the combined guest-room and kitchen that occasionally their vigilant spouses surprised them at their draughts, with an emphatic admonition to return to their wonted tasks, and to domestic fidelity in general.

It was truly a warm and pleasant September afternoon. Peggy's cakes and Nancy's beer were quite up to their well-recognized standard; yet this fact scarcely accounted for the large gathering in the house and about the door. Fully two dozen men were eating, drinking, smoking, but especially noisily disputing upon politics. A solitary Indian, on his way from the Susquehanna to the City of Brotherly Love with a load of baskets, who had bartered some of his handiwork for Nancy's insidious refreshment, listened curiously to the animated tones of the discussion, but evinced little interest in its platitudes. The saddle horses, which were fastened by their bridle straps to fence posts or rails, turned their heads, as if in wonder at such protracted leisure; and a gray squirrel squatted in a listening attitude on a limb of the crookedest of the "bean trees."

Of the group—excluding the Indian—all but one shared in the strife of tongues. The exception was a young man whose age was probably a year or two short of thirty. He was somewhat above medium height, and of intellectual expression. His clothes were perceptibly more tasteful than those worn by the remainder of the company; and that they had not been frayed by labor was also evident. As he tilted his chair against the wall his moving eye wandered inquiringly from face to face, while he keenly noted the opinions expressed by the convivial company. Once or twice he was appealed to for corroboration, but invariably managed to evade any positive declaration.



"Will ye no try a mug o' the new cider, Mither Tryon?" asked Miss Nancy, shrewdly noticing that he who abstained so strictly from speech did not emulate her other guests in devotion to beverages. "My word for 't, it's jist got the right smack."

"Yes, Mister Will," urged Peggy, "take a draught of the sweet apple juice. 'Twill put you in heart for the rest of your journey, and prove to you what sort of fruit grows on this slaty ridge."

Tryon suffered himself to be persuaded, and quaffed from the thick, blue vessel into which Miss Mawhort had hastened to draw the liquor. While he drank, a stir in front of the house drew his attention, and he heard the words, "Why it's Havard Brown, on Saladin." He paused, listened intently, and then set the half-drained mug on the table, and crept to the side of the door, where he could overhear what was said without, while remaining invisible.

The loungers outside had descried down the Lancaster road the approach of a solitary horseman. A single glance at steed and rider sufficed, and two or three voices exclaimed simultaneously, "Why, it's Havard Brown, on Saladin; maybe he can give us some news!" Leisurely the traveler drew nigh. His roadster evoked undisguised admiration from the on-lookers, being a handsome pacer of medium size, with a glossy coat shading between brown and black, and a superb mane and tail. Rustic hyperbole credited him with being "swift as the wind." The impatient gossips, muttering complaints that a horse of such phenomenal powers should be permitted to

move so sleepily, eagerly assembled in the road, to intercept the rider.

For the first time, apparently, the latter—a tall, well-formed young fellow of five-and-twenty—became conscious of his proximity to Peggy Hambleton's, and, observing the purpose of its familiar frequenters to parley with him, instinctively spoke to his beast, and—yet not without a slight display of impatience, and a shrug of the shoulders, as he glanced at the lounging place—drew up opposite the door.

“Any news, Havard?”

Before Saladin's rider could reply a hasty exclamation upon the part of one of the questioners drew the attention of the company to a “chair” coming down the Lancaster road. It was almost upon them when discovered, so intent were the gossips upon communication with Brown; and only the rattle of its single pair of wheels, whose spokes were affected by a long spell of dry weather, had announced it.

Not all the folk in the road knew the occupant; but the young horseman, recognizing him at once, courteously alighted, and, going to the side of the “chair,” saluted him with, “Good afternoon, Judge Moore; I hope you are well, sir.”

“Thank you, Havard, I'm about as well as a man may hope to be when he has lived three quarters of a century and is tormented with gout. I can scarcely shake hands with you, but—there, I've accomplished it now. I'm exceedingly glad to see you. How's your mother?”

“Mother's as well as usual, thank you, Judge, and

I know she would like to see you over at our house. I regret that you are suffering so. Does nothing give you relief?"

"No; one might as well throw physic to the dogs, for all the good it does in my case; but, tell me, have you any news from below? We are on different sides of the controversy, I know; but that need not prevent our neighborliness. Lame as I am, I have been over at the 'Turk's Head,' and I find that the royal arms were completely victorious yesterday."

The venerable man was a stickler for etiquette; yet his lustrous black eyes flashed with the fire of youth, and his young friend could detect a shade of personal triumph in the last sentence. The group of idlers hung, upon Brown's response, it being exactly what they also desired to hear. The Judge had nodded to them collectively upon his arrival; and later to Peggy and Nancy, who now stood in the doorway, profoundly interested in the colloquy. The young man hesitated, as if doubtful of the propriety of telling what he knew; and then, evidently persuaded that no harm could come from his communication, remarked:

"They say that Washington expects to try it again before long; there are movements on foot that look as though something were up."

One of the bystanders impatiently interrupted with the query, "What's said about the fight in Birmingham? Were we licked all to pieces, as we heard late last night?"

"Yes," answered Brown. "When Cornwallis came over the creek by Jefferis's he fell upon Sulli-

van and fought him up on the high ground, where the marquis was wounded in the leg; and then, when Sullivan couldn't hold the position any longer, Greene came up from Chadd's, and saved him from destruction."

"Well, did the whole army get away all right?"

"Pretty much so. If Sullivan had had pickets out along the fords, to watch the redcoats, so as to be sure that Howe's army was divided, Washington would have crossed at Chadd's, and struck Knypshausen, and finished him up with all the British baggage, and then taken Cornwallis when he could not help himself. We lost a smart lot, but still the army got away to Chester last night, and went to Darby early this morning: and, as they say, Washington's brisking up to face Howe once more."

In spite of his usual courtliness a scornful smile illumined the pallid face of the Judge; and he could not forbear saying to his young friend: "Havard, the cause of the rebels is wrong, and cannot prosper. Besides, the trained men of arms are on the king's side. Your Washington, I admit, has many fine traits, but in military skill he is no match for the royal generals. Take my word for it, Howe will catch him one of these days; or Cornwallis, who is a very likely soldier, will bring him to with a round turn."

"But, Judge, you forget how brilliantly Washington outgeneraled Cornwallis last winter, at Trenton; and if the scouts had only done their duty on the Brandywine yesterday he would surely have defeated Howe. I have not been brought up to

understand the principles of strategy, but those who know something of such things say that Washington's plan was an excellent one—to cross at Chadd's and attack the small army there while the larger one under Howe and Cornwallis was miles away. Only the carelessness of the mounted scouts spoiled it."

The Judge could not but recognize the force of Brown's argument, and contented himself with criticising the Revolutionary movement in general, and prophesying its utter failure before spring. Then, not relishing the fact that his remarks had been made in the presence of a crowd that took no part in the discussion, he gathered up his lines, spoke to his trusty horse, and with a nod to the company, and a friendly farewell to Havard Brown, deliberately drove on to the store of his judicial *confrère*, Squire Bell.

The gossips recovered their tongues as soon as he departed, and vented their spleen upon "the old Tory," charging him with being in league with America's oppressors, and his home at Moore Hall as constituting a rendezvous for the minions of the king, and one zealot remarked, "He ought to be mobbed!"

Havard Brown responded with some warmth. "You well know," he said, "what sentiments I entertain in this unfortunate quarrel. Yet I would have you know that Judge Moore is a noble-spirited man, and conscientious in his attitude. Although we must disagree with him, he and many others all around us are honest in their opposition to the Revo-

lution; and we certainly ought not to speak unkindly of our neighbors. It is quite as difficult for them to yield their opinions as it is for us."

How long he might have proceeded in this vein is indeterminable; but at this juncture the involuntary orator caught sight of a youthful feminine figure, with such a transfer of interest that he contrived to bring his remarks to a period; but not before the young woman, who carried a basket, had hurried by the excited group, keeping well on its outskirts, and evidently shrinking from contact with it. Then, edging away from his catechists, the young man mounted his horse, and while their murmurs at his abrupt departure still sounded in his ears, rode down the Howelltown road, into which the maiden had turned.

It was no wonder that rustic gossips fed upon the pabulum of war. The booming of the guns at the battle of the Brandywine, the day before, had been plainly heard on the high ground about Peggy Hambleton's; and one of the residents of the hamlet, who happened to be at the "Turk's Head" during the progress of the fray, had viewed from an elevation near the inn the brilliant array of men in scarlet, with burnished arms, as they moved onward, through Sconnelltown, and over Osborne's Hill, to attack the Americans at Birmingham meeting-house. What would next occur—where the scene should now be shifted—were the uppermost themes in the minds of the inhabitants along the important "king's highway" between Philadelphia and Lancaster.

Saladin covered the distance between Peggy's and the briskly walking maiden in a trice; and the latter, half turning at the sound of hoof-beats, disclosed the face of a girl of twenty-three. A pair of clear blue eyes shone out from a capacious sunbonnet; while dimpled cheeks, soft with the charm of maidenhood, and slightly tinged, mayhap, with the abruptness of the meeting, supplied an admirable background to rosy lips and an aquiline nose. A mass of brown hair, neatly coiled, was hidden by the primitive head covering.

"Frances!"

"Havard!"

The first name was uttered eagerly, the second with an atom of reserve, yet cordially.

The horseman dismounted, thrust his left hand through the bridle rein, and with his right heartily grasped a plump little member that was willingly extended. The basket, which contained a few purchases at Squire Henny Bell's, was appropriated by the young man, and the pair walked slowly onward through woods of chestnut and oak to the verge of the Valley.

The road soon sharply descended the South Valley Hill, and as the primeval forest had been thinned by the woodman's axe, glimpses of a blue beyond flashed upon the friends. They came to a clearing where the road forked, the branch to the left winding down to the Swedes' Ford road at Mary Howell's, while the other, first swerving round to the eastward, again turned nearly northward to anticipate the same road a little east of Davis's.

The faint vista disclosed through the tree tops having given place to an unobstructed view of a portion of the Great, or Chester Valley, exclamations of pleasure were indulged in by the pair. The view was not extensive, the nearer woodland circumscribing it upon both the west and the east, while it was scarcely three miles across the depression to the foot of the North Valley Hill. But there are few lovelier scenes than the modest vale that lies so cozily between its inclosing ridges, narrowing, widening, or curving with the slaty barrier on the south, and the forest-crowned wall of sandstone on the north.

The brilliant, slanting sunlight invested a gap in the opposite hill with such artistic perspective that its dreamy gates resembled Titanic lips unfolding to salute the bashful southern ridge. The western gate was styled "Mount Misery," while the eastern was known as "Mount Joy"—names that tradition declares were bestowed by William Penn during a search for his "Letitia Manor,"—he having lost his bearings on the former and found them again on the latter.

To the right of Mount Joy, over a fascinating sweep of hill and dale, appeared the distant heights of Philadelphia County, clad in that exquisite blue that nature so freely employs in garnishing her favorite bits of scenery. And just over the sleepy portals that guarded the hidden Valley Forge and the Schuylkill was a delicate crown of the same tissuey tint, that told of ranges far beyond, which skirt a wider valley reaching to the Susquehanna.



Havard Brown hitched his horse to a sapling that stood by the roadside, that he might scale the rough-rider fence into a field; and, Miss Jones having been helped over, the friends advanced to a spot in the shade of a venerable chestnut, and scanned the Valley in the direction of Diamond Rock. No village was discernible, and the dwellings scattered over the field of view were comparatively few.

The conversation of the couple was that of familiars who were glad to meet again; and after Brown had explained his morning run toward Philadelphia to secure information concerning the Brandywine battle, Miss Jones remarked apologetically, "I fear that mother will be alarmed unless I reach home soon. I would, of course, have taken our wood road near Peggy's, but that I must stop at Eliza Workhizer's."

Her companion insisted upon attending her, and without further delay let down some bars leading into Workhizer's lane, to admit her and Saladin, and, having put them up again, led the way to the farmhouse at the foot of the hill. Miss Jones's errand being speedily accomplished, they availed themselves of a private road on Abel Reese's property to the eastward; and in another quarter of an hour approached the plain, snug dwelling that the young lady called "home."

"You must put Saladin in the stable, Havard," pleasantly commanded Miss Jones, "Mother will not let you go home before tea." And, as her mother now appeared in the yard, and seconded the invitation, he consented to remain, but merely secured

Saladin's bridle strap to a ring in the hitching post.

The stone house of Samuel and Mercy Jones lay close to the foot of the South Valley Hill. It consisted of two stories, embracing two rooms each, and an attic. A brooklet ran through the yard, and was used for general household purposes; while a spring-house, containing a bubbling fountain of limestone water, kept the milk and butter cool, and furnished the table with a beverage.

The barn was of logs, and of good size. The front of the dwelling looked out upon the wooded South Hill, and an apple orchard lay between, while directly in front of the house was a number of large shade trees. At some distance to the west was Mount Airy, a moderate eminence crowned with a grove of oaks, from which an unusually open view of the Valley was obtainable. One could locate Saint Peter's up the Valley, and the eastward sweep looked across the Schuylkill, as well as down the course of its pebbly banks.

Frances excused herself while she went to lay aside her traveling dress, and soon reappeared ready for kitchen and dairy service, but none the less attractive in neat workaday garments. Her mother begged that indulgence for lack of adequate preparation for an esteemed guest which few house-keepers of any era fail to request, but the supper was delicious, and the exquisitely clean kitchen in which it was served imparted an additional zest to the meal.

No other topic could receive such close attention as that of the political state of the country. Mr.

Jones, who arrived from an absence at Gordon's Ford just in time for participation in the repast, and who seemed pleased to greet Havard, dwelt earnestly upon the embarrassing condition of affairs, and expressed fears that grave local complications would ensue.

Not every resident of the Great Valley was in sympathy with the Colonies in their desperate contest. Indeed, the Tories were numerous, and many a drove of fat cattle, and load of hay and grain, found their way to the emissaries of Britain, who were prepared to pay roundly for supplies that the slender purse of the patriots could not compass. Mr. Jones was not rashly outspoken in his approval of the Declaration of Independence, but his secret desires embraced the success of the Revolutionary movement.

Havard Brown's views were crystallized in partiality for the patriot cause. The repressive tenets of his Quaker ancestry relative to military violence had been potent in discouraging him from espousing the profession of a soldier; yet there were times when he seriously questioned the morality of neutrality, and felt a strong inclination to cast in his lot with his countrymen, who were venturing their all upon the success or failure of armed resistance to the exactions of George the Third.

Havard paid his hostess an unmistakable compliment in the heartiness of his appetite, and ate the flaky rusk and appetizing ham and eggs, and sipped the fragrant tea—a great rarity in that year!—with a relish that delighted her.

The sun had already dropped behind the trees on Mount Airy, and it was necessary for Havard to turn his face homeward, since some chores needed attention before night; so, excusing himself, he mounted his now impatient horse, and, passing out into the road connecting with the Swedes' Ford, soon swung around to the Valley Creek, and, skirting it, came up steadily toward his home, which lay at the head of the Valley Forge dam.

The fine hills that we have called the "gates" to the Forge were in full view. Mount Joy directly confronted the house, and far up its stony steeps grew the abundant chestnut timber. The fertile fields at its base lent a domestic charm to the attractive picture, and this was enhanced by the peculiar shade that the evening time imparts. Dusk was fast affecting the meadowy ravine through which ran the creek, and Mount Misery especially was taking on a somber hue, when the young farmer rode up the bank to the substantial barn and stabled his faithful steed.

A matronly form now appeared upon the porch; a mother voice, pure and sweet, uttered the words, "Thee has come home at last, Havard—a little later than I could have wished. But thee has been busy, and thee's tired and hungry. The supper's been waiting this long time. What! thee's had thy supper—at Mercy Jones's! Then thee's had a better than mine. And how is my Frances, whom I love almost as I would a daughter?"

What a placid face it was that Rebecca Brown presented beneath the little Quaker cap, that she per-

sisted in wearing notwithstanding the fact that her membership in the Society terminated when she "married out of meeting."

As we have observed, Havard followed his father in phrase, although sometimes in addressing his mother he fell into the Friends' way. Resembling that father in manly presence, his face largely partook of his mother's features; and many a rustic maiden stole admiring glances at one whose heritage from both parents, in physical and psychical respects alike, was so goodly.

Havard briefly explained to his mother the situation of affairs, so far as he had been able to determine it, and when the evening work was done no time was lost by either in preparation for retiring.

## CHAPTER II

### THE VAGARIES OF VULCAN

ON Saturday morning Havard Brown rose long before the sun, to plow a field for wheat, whose seeding had been postponed because of the dryness of the soil. Finding, after several rounds, that his gear required repair at the smithy, he took a well-worn path close to the creekside in the ravine, that led directly to the Valley Forge. The narrow strip of meadow was unfenced on the hillsides, the steep slopes of the gap, covered with loose, slippery stones, furnishing no temptation to cattle to stray from the green stretches at their base.

A ten minutes' walk brought Havard to the bend in the creek, where, on a wider flat, stood the Valley Forge. A bridge spanned the creek in front of it, and just above it was the dam breast. To the eastward, through an opportune depression in Mount Joy, a wood road connecting with the Gulph road offered means of transportation Philadelphia-ward, while a similar glen on the opposite side of the creek provided a rough thoroughfare by which raw metal was brought from the furnace at Warwick.

The fires of this young industry were already aglow for their work of the day, when the plowman approached the smithy connected with it. The

brawny blacksmith promptly undertook a little job in accommodation of a neighbor's needs. Meanwhile Havard was saluted by Colonel William Dewees, one of the proprietors; and as a matter of course the topic upon which both became absorbingly engaged was the recent events in Birmingham.

"Pretty close work, Colonel!" suggestively remarked the younger.

"Yes," responded the ironmaster, who held a position in the militia service, "things are getting as warm as yonder fires; there's no telling what will turn up in a very little while."

"Think that the trouble 'll swing round this way?"

"Shouldn't wonder; all the more because Sam Potts came up from High Street bridge last night about eleven, and said he was sure that the army would make in this direction."

"What, you don't mean that this neighborhood is likely to see a battle, do you?"

"Well, not exactly that; but, as far as I can make out the situation, I shouldn't wonder if Washington would creep out the Lancaster road and show himself to the reds pretty soon. It's altogether likely that they'll come across from Birmingham, and try the other door into town;" and the colonel picked up a stone and scratched on the bridge planks a rude plan of the probable position of the British forces on the other side of the "Turk's Head," the present county seat of West Chester.

"You see," said he, "the reds are somewhere over about the 'Seven Stars,' at Village Green—that is,

part of 'em—and the other lot can't be far from Concord; now they'll make for the 'Turk' sure, and take the highroad for the Schuylkill, at one of the fords, see if they don't; and if so, then look out for the big guns before long."

"Hang it," he continued, after a moment, glancing around to see who might be within earshot, "Havard, we're in a pretty bad fix here."

His companion looked surprised; whereupon the colonel motioned him to the side of a little spring that trickled from beneath Mount Joy, and said in a whisper, "Havard, you haven't heard any intimations about ammunition and stores being kept here, have you?"

"No," responded the other, astonished; and the ironmaster, relieved, resumed:

"I guess it's been very well kept, after all; we've been mighty afraid that the Tryons would smell the powder; and you know they are near relations of that rascally governor over in New York."

Perceiving that all this was Greek to his auditor, he proceeded: "For some time we have been storing arms and powder, and some other goods, in that frame shed back of the Forge, and also in the grist mill. It's been a ticklish thing to haul so much stuff without exciting suspicion; and the teams mostly get here about nine or ten o'clock at night—especially if their loads are much out of the ordinary shape. Only yesterday Bill Tryon seemed curious to know why we hauled so many supplies, and judged we must be expecting to do a bigger business."



"Havard," he continued, "I've studied you for some time, and while I know you've never taken any part in the Revolution I think I can trust you in an important matter;" and he looked searchingly at the young man.

The latter flushed, but without hesitation replied: "Colonel, you're right; I have thought a great deal about it, and haven't been quick to act, but of late I've felt that I ought to be doing something for our country, and I think you may trust me."

His bright, honest eyes evidently impressed and satisfied his perturbed neighbor; and after a few moments, glancing around once more to be sure that he could not be overheard, the colonel exclaimed: "I think we'll have to be getting the stores out of here. Washington is badly handicapped with undrilled men. I'm afraid if we do have a battle in the Valley that he can't make it; and if he should be beaten—why, the reds will pounce on us, sure. Now the Forge and the mill will be in danger, if anybody smells the stock—it may be we'll be ruined anyhow, but if they get wind of the stores, that will settle the matter. We'll have to get the whole thing across the river to insure safety from the reds."

The colonel stopped to drink from the spring, using a calabash that lay at its brink; then, resuming his remarks, inquired, "Havard, will you help get the stuff across?"

It was a clear test, but Havard scarcely hesitated before saying, "Yes, I'll do it for Freedom's sake. It's hard to think of shedding blood, even in a con-

test for liberty; and perhaps this is no better, for the ammunition will be used that way sometime; but still I should feel better not to pull trigger at a human being, be he Britisher or not."

The colonel looked gratified, and responded: "Well, I'll let you know when it must be done; most likely it'll have to be at night, but whatever can be done by day that won't excite suspicion had better be looked after then. Leastways I'll let you know when we make the strike."

The ironmaster moved as though to leave the spot; but paused, and whispered, "I don't know what to say about some more stores we have hidden; it's nip and tuck whether they ought to be removed or not."

Havard was curious to know where these were kept, but his sense of propriety smothered the inquiry.

But the colonel had determined not only to reveal the hiding place, but to ask Havard's opinion in the case.

"You know the mill across the Valley in Hammer Hollow?"

"Yes, very well; the Hollow's a sneaky place to get into; a man might live in the neighborhood a month of Sundays and never suspect its existence."

"Just so," laughed the colonel, "that's the very reason we used it. Howe might pass the spot a hundred times a day and not discover it; the question is, is it best to get the stuff away lest Howe find it, or let it rest there?"

Havard modestly said that his opinion was worth

very little, but such as it was he would suppose that it was as safe a place as could be found.

For some time longer they continued to discuss the subject; and the grimy smith had finished Havard's work, and resumed his regular labors, when at last the conference was broken up, and the two returned to the shop. Havard picked up his harness, inquired the cost of the repairs, and then hastened up the meadow path. A slide of stones attracted his attention, and for a moment he fancied that he heard footsteps among the loose fragments far above him, but he dismissed the impression.

If the colonel had heard the sound referred to, his military instinct would have led him to inquire carefully into its cause. Yet, as he stood by the bridge, lost in reverie, looking after the retreating form of Havard, glad to have secured the help of a young man of such good judgment, he fancied he detected a moving figure on Mount Joy. It was but for a moment that he perceived it, and now, fully aroused from his meditations, he scanned the hillside for a solution of the mystery. But he saw nothing more.

By what chance was it that William Tryon, the uncommunicative member of Peggy Hambleton's choice company, and pointedly referred to in the colloquy by the spring, had come across Mount Joy that morning, from his home near the Valley Meeting? In truth it was a simple domestic errand, which was immediately abandoned when he discovered the interview in the edge of the woods. Only one word of the conversation reached his ears.

It was when the ironmaster chuckled at the thought of the security of the goods in Hammer Hollow, and unguardedly uttered "stores." But it conveyed a world of meaning.

Havard and his farm boy filled up the entire day with their circuits of the fallow field. The partially baked condition of the soil, together with the presence of refractory rocks, made it hard to plow, and the ringing of the supper bell was a welcome sound.

## CHAPTER III

### CUPID AT CHURCH

SUNDAY dawned—rather prematurely, Havard thought; and the weary farmer reluctantly flung off the bed covers, and prepared to discharge the light duties of the morning. Perhaps Saladin's grooming was more particular than in common, since he was to bear his master to Saint Peter's, up the Valley.

Havard brought in an ample supply of wood, built a fire in the huge fireplace, and put on the swinging crane a kettle filled with fresh water from the spring in the meadow. His filial eye took in many little services whose thoughtfulness gratified a mother's heart, and when Mrs. Brown—a well preserved widow of forty-five—appeared in her neat kitchen dress her beaming face attested her appreciation. "Dear Havard," she murmured, "how kind he has ever been—just like his father!" and a tear dimmed her eye.

Samuel Brown had been at rest for several years. A lung fever had carried him off, as his widow sighingly said, "before the evil days" of the American Revolution. His body was among the first to find interment in the little burying ground on which was erected, a few years after the Treaty of Ver-

sailles, the small stone structure known as "Eagle School."

The elder Brown's educational advantages had been slight, but he was a natural philosopher. The shady nooks of the Great Valley provided him a retreat for communion with nature. In his journeyings up and down the verdant vale he thought great thoughts of life; and if he had made no substantial progress in solving its mysteries, he was at least not outrivaled by the schoolmen.

Havard, at twenty-five, was, of course not as mature mentally as was his father at forty-five; but his views upon general matters bore a strong resemblance to those of his parent. The ripening of the years was necessary to develop in him the fullness of the elder philosopher, but the beloved wife and mother had often remarked to some cherished friend, "They are as alike as two peas!"

As Mrs. Brown preferred a quiet hour at home, her son set forth to church alone, riding his favorite black. His route led past Cousin Samuel Havard's, and near the foot of Diamond Rock, on the North Valley Hill, which had recently been bared of its trees, its rugged gray masses, sown with crystals, dully reflecting the yellow sunshine, and forming a conspicuous landmark. Valley Creek, tumbling saucily in its stony bed at Cedar Hollow, occasionally disclosed a piece of pure white quartz, and sang a cheery strain of nature's roundelay.

Ascending a gentle elevation, our horseman pursued his way to Saint Peter's, which was regarded as a model of ecclesiastical architecture. It was

surrounded by shade trees, and from its mid-position commanded a fine view up and down the Great Valley.

It was still early in the forenoon, and not another worshiper had arrived—unless, indeed, the sexton were considered apart from his official relation to the edifice, wherefore Havard embraced the opportunity of examining the obituaries upon the fairly numerous stones in the churchyard.

One of his former neighbors lay close by his feet. Stooping to read the characters on the stone, he found the personal injunction that has proved such a universal favorite with mortuary versifiers:

“ Remember Youth as you pass by,  
As you are now so once was I  
As I am now so must you be,  
Prepare for Death and follow me.”

The eulogist of another departed consolingly testified:

“ But tho' his Body is Laid in the Dust  
His soul is in Heaven among the Just  
Rejoicing Joines that Heavenly Choare  
And Sing praises to God for Evermore.”

Havard mused long and unsuccessfully upon the meaning intended to be conveyed by

“ Blest Door of Bliss to weary Saints  
Thou art grim Death because  
Secured as in a cabinet  
Their Dust is in the Tombe—”

and though it was scarcely his to indulge in literary criticism, he could not but observe the lavish use

of italics and capitals by the stonecutter in another attempt of the poet :

“ *My Race is Run, my Life is done  
And I lye in the Ground  
Intomb'd in Clay Until the Day  
I hear the Trumpet Sound.*”

Some of the stones were so crude and dingy that their inscriptions were undecipherable.

While bending over one of the latter, Havard became aware of the flutter of a dainty dress, and of the momentary hiding of the sun by a passing body, which cast a shadow on the headstone. Looking up, he saw a young woman slowly moving about the churchyard and casually scanning the little array of grassy mounds. She had suddenly turned the corner of the church, and had not yet observed him. But the next moment her eye lighted upon him, whereupon with a slight start she slowly came forward.

A glance at the strikingly pretty face of the girl was sufficient to inform the young man that it was not a neighbor who stood before him. Her attire alone would have indicated that. It did not require a second look to determine that they had met before, and that it was Miss Ethel Thomson, of Philadelphia. She was first to speak in recognition of the meeting, and frankly extended her hand, which Havard took rather shyly, but appreciatively. After the exchange of a few sentences he noticed two fine horses tethered in the shade of a tree in the farther corner of the churchyard, and recognized a young man who was approaching as William Bull.



Mr. Bull was upon the point of introducing Havard Brown to the young lady, when he suddenly remembered that they were not strangers, and confined his opening remark to a hearty salute of his friend and neighbor, and an inquiry after his health and that of his mother.

Unversed in the precise etiquette of conventional urban society, Havard Brown was, nevertheless, a gentleman; and his slightly grave manner favorably impressed the girl, who was not at a loss to discern his unfamiliarity with the easy usages of the drawing-room. Her own manner and words were very gracious—at least so thought Havard, who was, to tell the truth, just a trifle ill at ease. It wanted a half hour to the time of service; and as it was fully ten minutes before the approach of any of the members of the parish the three enjoyed a chat, during which Havard learned that Miss Thomson was on a visit to both her aunt, Mrs. John Bull, of near the Swedes' Ford, and her uncle, Archibald Thomson, who resided some distance above it, and, like his relative, to the east of the river. As her mother had been an attendant upon the services at Saint Peter's, in her own girlhood, a natural curiosity to see the spot had induced her to ask her cousin to attend her to the church, early enough to view the premises before the assembling of the congregation.

But the conversation soon turned to the inevitable theme of the British invasion; and Havard learned that Washington, who had retired to Germantown, was already showing signs of a march; and that stirring events were imminent. By this time sev-

eral of the regular worshipers drew near, a few on foot, more on horses, while four arrived in two chaises—a vehicle for which the road was not well adapted. The rector, too, making his appearance, there was a general cessation of talk, and all entered the cool house of worship with reverent demeanor, and sat in the high-backed pews that stood on the brick floor.

The clergyman's manner pleased Havard, and he attentively regarded the devout forms of the Church of England service. The sermon itself was brief, and contained but little hint of the trial that was upon the land. Havard wondered why the sympathies of the minister, who rarely preached nowadays, were on the side of the loyalists. The time occupied by the service was not long, and Havard was surprised at its close.

There was no hurried departure from the churchyard, but friends freely greeted each other, and inquired concerning the health and happiness of the various families represented. It was probably a quarter of an hour before the sociable group dispersed, and the heads of the horses were turned toward home. Mr. Bull insisted that Havard should accompany himself and Miss Thomson to his father's.

Havard's mingled devout and patriotic meditations had suffered an intrusion. His eyes rested at intervals upon Miss Thomson's face, and the conviction grew that she was a very charming girl. Perhaps for this reason, although he demurred at accompanying the cousins to the river, he evinced

a willingness to escort them some distance down the Swedes' Ford road. The party then made for that main highway, and rode slowly down the center of the Valley. The dust alone proved disagreeable, which led Havard to remark that the signs indicated rain.

"How unfortunate!" cried Miss Ethel. "It will spoil my visit!"

But both the young men exclaimed, "The ground needs it, it's very dry." And Havard added that the fields had been suffering for want of moisture for some time.

The pretty Ethel protested that the weather might remain propitious a little longer for her sake, without doing any serious damage, and the wiser Havard tactfully said that he was agreed that her wish should be gratified. But Mr. Bull vetoed the proposition.

Past the Great Valley Presbyterian Church jogged the horses; down, past Mary Howell's tavern a mile or more to Walkerville; and there Havard would have excused himself, but his friend urged that he go as far as the "King," at least. As they turned to the right, in consonance with this arrangement, Havard called Miss Thomson's attention to the meeting-house of the Baptists on the slope of the South Valley Hill, and alluded to the outspoken patriotism of its pastor. His fair companion seemed to relish the society of the man who was so little of her world.

"Now," said Bull, as they veered to the left, "Havard, you may as well go the whole way with

us. Mother will be glad to see you, and we can have a pleasant afternoon. Ethel will enjoy her visit all the better for your company."

Havard hesitated, when that young lady, who appeared to consider that she had been brought into the discussion and must take some part in it, remarked that it would certainly be a pleasure to have her cousin's friend accompany them to dinner—and this almost persuaded him.

"Will not your mother excuse you, Mr. Brown?" inquired Miss Thomson, who knew that he and his mother constituted the "family."

Havard recollected his mother's unselfish injunction to accept an invitation to dinner, if one were offered; then he smiled and said, "Yes; and she is so good that she will probably be pleased to hear of your kindness, but—"

"Why, then," speedily responded both of his companions, "surely the way is open after that!" And truly it must have been; for under the potent influence of beauty and a musical voice Havard yielded.

Two or three miles more brought them within view of "The King of Prussia" inn. To the eastward a crossroad led through the Gulph to Philadelphia, while the same highway, continued westward, crossed Valley Creek just below the Forge. The site of the hostelry had been wisely chosen, and it was destined to a long career of "accommodation for man and beast." As it had not yet completed its first decade (it bore the date "1769") everything about the premises wore a new air, that proved

attractive to up-country wagoners, who flourished their snapping leather whips over the heads of bell-crowned teams attached to ponderous "Conestogas."

The royal equestrian on the double sign of the "King" was also comparatively new, the gorgeous pigments of his apparel being as yet but little faded by the assaults of the weather. In fact, the German monarch wore the mien of a conqueror in his blue coat, yellow breeches and cocked hat. And yet there was a jauntiness about the style in which he sat the proud brown steed, with wondrously arched neck and purple tail, that suggested the gallant.

As the trio approached the inn the loungers on its porch found a new topic in the strange feminine traveler. Ethel could not be unconscious of their gaze, even if she did not overhear their hurried exclamations and inquiries. But she affected to be engaged in conversation with Havard, and thus ran the disagreeable gauntlet. Nor did it occur to her until the next day, when teased by her mischievous cousin, that one may exchange the frying pan for the fire.

Will was quick to perceive the success of his impromptu scheme "to get Ethel and Havard together," and laughed heartily; but the pleasant conference was momentarily interrupted by the approach on the road from the Forge of another horseman. As the friends looked up they recognized Will Tryon.

Since all three greeted the newcomer with the usual courtesy, it was evident to Havard that Miss Thomson knew him. The gentleman himself was

surprised to find Ethel in the neighborhood, and to observe that she was acquainted with Havard Brown.

Will it be believed that something akin to jealousy stirred in Havard's heart as he cogitated upon the significance of the simple incident? It is ridiculous, of course, to assume that he was in love, and just as absurd to infer that he was jealous; yet a queer influence controlled him. In harmony with such perplexing emotions, Havard experienced pleasure in the observation that Tryon's presence was not grateful to either Will Bull or his cousin. He did not know that Tryon had sought the young lady's hand assiduously, and that he had become annoying to her.

Tryon was heading for the Gulph; but would gladly have changed his course for the Swedes' Ford in association with Ethel; but the courtesy of her cousin did not extend so far as to embrace an invitation. But he would not have been baffled by this lack had he not been so unwise as to have said, at the moment of meeting, that he was bound for the Gulph. He bit his lips as he perceived how poorly he had played his cards, and lost a coveted opportunity.

As it was, he was compelled to make the best of it, and ride reluctantly away to the rugged hills just appearing above the rise in the road a little farther on. And the trio, soberly, as became the day, rode steadily down the widening vale, passing at last between a stone inn and its barn to the ford. The horses paused in the swift stream, and eagerly

plunged their nostrils in the bright waters, before completing their journey across and upstream to a mansion and estate where now stands the pleasant borough of Norristown.

The reception and dinner, and the *tête-à-tête* of the afternoon on the banks of Stony Creek, strangely affected Havard Brown; and although he reproached himself for leaving his mother so long, he was still reluctant to bid such attractive scenes farewell, all of which Will Bull guessed, and chuckled over.

On his return trip Havard scarcely noticed the dense woodland on one hand, or the arable fields on the other; and when he recounted the experiences of the day to his mother he winced at the omission of the most important particulars, which he was loth to communicate lest her keen eye might detect a cloud the size of a woman's hand.

The domestic work accomplished, mother and son sat for a while upon the southern porch, and watched the shadows deepen in the glen, and heard the vespers of the little creatures that gave tone to the darkness. The stars were struggling into vision, but a bland breeze from down the river led Mrs. Brown to predict a speedy change of weather.

## CHAPTER IV

### A BIT OF BUFF-AND-BLUE

ON Monday Havard was planning the consummation of a task which would require a brief absence from home, when, as he sat in the kitchen, that opened toward the creek, he was aroused by a knock at the door. Opening it, he saw Colonel Dewees, whose face was flushed and manner flurried, as he motioned Havard to the barnyard, where, under the overhanging floor of the second story, he whispered his communication.

"I have orders this morning about the stores, Havard; a battle is expected in two or three days, and we must be prepared to take care of all we have—either for immediate use, or in case the gage goes against us. I will trust to your keeping an open eye, and being ready, when the time comes, to help in whatever may be necessary."

Havard looked much, but said nothing more than that he would not be found wanting at the critical moment. The colonel interpreted his look of inquiry aright, and said: "I have news that Washington is on his way up the Lancaster road, expecting to head off Howe. Of course, they must meet somewhere very soon, and then we'll have a fight."

"Do you think the meeting 'll be anywhere in this part of the county?"



"It's impossible to say, for it all depends upon where the redcoats are moving at present. Of course, they're coming toward the river, to try to cross at one of the fords, and Washington will head them on the best ground he can find. The general must have some reason to believe that they are on the march over this way, or he wouldn't be moving up the Lancaster, you see."

Havard scratched his head in perplexity, and then awkwardly and shyly said, "Do you think I could be of use in the battle?"

The colonel intuitively comprehended the case. The young man who was conscientiously opposed to violence and the taking of life, entertained such ardent sentiments of duty to his country, that at the crisis he was willing to put his life in the scale. Admiring him for his noble impulse, the colonel replied thoughtfully, "Havard, I think that, perhaps, it would be better not to enter into it, if one comes off. What you will do afterward must depend upon your best judgment; but at present you have your mother to look out for. Beside, if any of us are known to be in the fight, and the thing should go the other way, the whole settlement 'll be burned out. You know there are some about here that are on the watch, and nothing's safe unless we are very careful."

Havard was relieved by this expression of the cool judgment of his neighbor, himself a military man and patriot; but something like a sigh escaped him as he abandoned the high resolve of a minute before.

The colonel spoke again: "I'm going over toward

Peggy Hambleton's to scout a bit, and see what's up; do you feel like riding over with me?"

"Yes, indeed, I will gladly go with you. I will tell mother; she's upstairs doing up the rooms."

Mrs. Brown discovered a spice of danger in the trip, but consented to Havard's absence, "especially in the company of so experienced a man as Neighbor Dewees."

It required but a minute or two to bridle Saladin, and throw the saddle on his back; then away they sped to cross the valley and climb the southern ridge.

The news had spread but meagerly; besides, the population of the valley was sparse; yet at several farmhouses by the way they found anxious faces, and heard inquiries for tidings of the progress of affairs. The colonel, without disclosing the source of his information, gave all to understand that it was reported that Washington was on his way westward, and thus kindled a flame of excitement throughout his route, undestined to be speedily extinguished.

The two horsemen learned the real situation before they reached the summit of the South Valley Hill. A party of the Continentals, under the command of Colonel Theodoric Bland, was exploring the byways bordering on the Lancaster road; and a detachment with which was that active commander of light horse, in person, was carefully scanning the region along the Swedes' Ford road. The pair would probably have been subjected to an overhauling but for the fact that the two colonels were well

acquainted, and the leader of the cavalry cordially greeted his comrade. After supplying considerable information relative to the country, the intersection of various leading roads, the fords, etc., Colonel Dewees and Havard pressed on over the road by which the light horse had come down into the valley, and as they turned the corner where stood the catalpas they met another squadron of the advance, which was followed closely by Maxwell's light infantry.

Next there appeared a brigade in which Havard proved particularly interested. It was the Pennsylvania Line, and at its head rode the redoubtable Wayne, whose birthplace was scarcely two miles westward of the spot. This beau ideal of a military officer halted as he recognized Havard's companion, and when the young man was introduced to him courteously saluted him, and alluded to the fact that they had been fairly acquainted before the opening of the war.

Wayne's every movement indicated the dashing general; his brilliant eye swept the region about him restlessly during the brief conversation that ensued, and he seemed to be anxious to get at the enemy.

"I tell you, Dewees," he said, as he caught up the reins to press on, "if those scouts had only attended to their duty down on the Brandywine, we'd 'a' had the day. We pummeled 'em right and left at Chadd's, and we could have easily finished 'em if we'd gone over in force, as the general intended. But we'll have 'em yet, see if we don't."

Havard scanned the ranks for familiar faces; nor did he look in vain, for presently he saw Hampton and Wersler, Buzzard and Rapp, Mattson and Bean, and others of the vicinity who had obeyed Wayne's flaming summons to defend their country. He could hardly tell how he felt, as he gazed upon these ill-clad patriots marching with eager step, despite the defeat of a few days previous. His soul was stirred to its depths, and he was unable to speak; but in his tear-stained face, twitching with an agitation that he could not conceal, his soldier friends read his sympathy and admiration.

Another cloud of dust heralded the approach of the Virginians under Muhlenberg and Weedon. Havard was fortunate in his association with the colonel; for the latter knew all the general officers and not a few of the regimental commanders, and was able to anticipate his inquiries. Although the former brigadier had been in a sense a neighbor, Havard had never met him; and the romance of his espousal of the colonial cause made him an object of interest. It was at the Trappe, not more than a dozen miles distant, that this clergyman was born; but it was in a Virginia parish that he electrified his congregation by a martial sermon, after which, throwing back the gown of his sacred office, and disclosing a Continental uniform and sword, he called upon his hearers to enlist in the cause of freedom.

Procter's artillery—or what was left of it—possessed a curious fascination for Havard. The grim thunderers of battle rolled heavily along in the company of wagons laden with ammunition and

other stores. Following this important arm of the service appeared several officers that Havard suspected of being of the highest rank. At this time the colonel and Havard were posted in a lane leading south of the highway near Squire Henny Bell's; but there was quite an air of excitement mingled with a forward movement upon the part of the colonel as he surveyed the distinguished group. "Hist," he said to Havard, in a low whisper, "that's the commander-in-chief; Armstrong's on one side, and Greene's on the other."

But with the colonel's desire to advance was also exhibited a diffidence, in which Havard fully shared. When the generals approached, riding a little in advance of the various aids, Dewees removed his hat, in respect to the general-in-chief. Immediately the central figure, tall, stately, and riding his horse with consummate ease, responded.

In a moment the general recognized the man who saluted him by the wayside, and, pausing, beckoned him to his side, and closely questioned him in an undertone regarding the accumulation of stores at the Valley Forge. What passed was unknown to Havard; it was some minutes before Dewees returned to him, after riding with the commander up the road.

The little army occupied a considerable while in passing the viewpoint of our horsemen. The road was narrow, and the men marched four abreast, with distinct intervals between the brigades. Who could surmise what was before them, either on the present day or on the morrow!

The colonel and Havard found their way down the abrupt ridge by way of the Church road through Walkerville to their home. As they were passing the Baptist meeting-house, a log structure less than thirty feet square that stood on the west side of the road—the graveyard being across the way—Deweë's remarked that Davy Jones looked well to-day on his big gray, and that it was rarely that a combination of preacher and soldier could be found in the same person; but that when Jones was pastor of the church they had just left behind them, he declared that he was a member of the church militant, and expected to fight when the time came.

Soon they crossed a little brook called by the Welsh settlers "Nant yr Ewig"; and when Havard mentioned this to his companion the latter reminded him that the township also bore a Welsh name, "Tre-yr-Duffryn," or "Tredyffrin"—"Tre," or "Tref," standing for "town" or "township," and "Dyffrin" for "broad, cultivated valley."

Before separating, the colonel recalled the matter of the stores, and again requested Havard to be ready for instant service.

It was but a fitful slumber that fell to the lot of either mother or son that night; and the leaden clouds that settled about the horizon when the sun went down, increasing the ordinary gloom in the recesses of Valley Creek, might have been regarded by a superstitious mind as an augury of misfortune and disaster; and when Tuesday was added to the calendar, the dull skies spoke no word of comfort to the hearts that were beating with anxiety.

The warm breath of the previous day had vanished, and the air was saturated with moisture. For want of appetite breakfast was late, and yet it was so dark in the usually bright kitchen that the time seemed two hours earlier.

Havard attempted nothing more than imperative attentions to the stock. An uneasy feeling was consuming him—a desire to witness, if not, indeed, participate in, the events of the day. In fact, he was debating the propriety of leaving his mother to the care of the boy in order to hover near the crisis spot, but filial fondness conquered. Long before it was light his companion of the previous day had disappeared from the vicinity of the Forge, his absence being known only to a trusty employee, for fear of complications where unfriendly eyes were ever on guard.

A bright thought struck Havard ere long. Mount Joy—why not climb it and obtain a view of the valley? It might be that nothing could be discerned, after all, but it would be worth the effort to obtain satisfaction. There was his father's spyglass, which would show much more than the unaided eye could hope to view.

It was in truth a poor atmosphere through which to gaze at distant objects, but by dint of patient looking Havard succeeded in making out moving masses on the hills beyond the "Admiral Warren," a tavern that stood near the junction of the Lancaster and Long Ford roads. There was every reason to believe that these were the Continentals; and it was certain that no combat was in progress,

there being an absence of smoke and of the sounds of battle.

If Havard could have likewise swept the region south of the Valley with his telescope he would have discovered the forward movement of the British. Up the Chester road from the "Seven Stars" came Cornwallis's division, ripe for what might prove a decisive encounter. The victory of Brandywine elated the English troops and their Hessian mercenaries, and nerved them for the approaching battle, when they would be unhampered by any stream of which the enemy could take advantage.

The various forces under the British general's command were skillfully handled. Knyphausen, who had so long amused the Americans at Chadd's Ford, while Howe and Cornwallis swiftly moved upon a circuitous flanking route, advanced through the embryo village of West Chester, passing the "Turk's Head." There some resentful civilian, burning with the recollection of the disastrous day at Birmingham, sped a brace of bullets on an errand of revenge, and two soldiers fell.

General Matthews proceeded to the vicinity of the "Indian King," encamping on the farm of David Dunwoody, overlooking the Great Valley. Donop, at the head of his Hessians, arrived by way of the "Boot," near the "Ship" tavern, while near the "Three Tuns" the other wing of the redcoats prepared for battle.

Washington selected for his headquarters the house of Joseph Malin, his forces being encamped between the "Admiral Warren" and the "White



Horse" taverns. The lesson of the Brandywine had been salutary, and the pickets were now disposed with unusual care. Every road was rigorously guarded, and the utmost precaution taken to prevent a surprise.

Wayne, to whom the ground was familiar, had been selected to lead in the fast approaching encounter. Washington reposed high trust in his lieutenant, who reciprocated the feeling by an ardent reliance upon the wisdom and skill of his commander. The dashing but prudent brigadier cast uneasy glances at the clouds, and chafed because the attack could not be made immediately.

At last, near the Goshen meeting-house, the crackle of musketry announced that the skirmishers were intent upon their work. It was only feeling the way toward a general engagement, but a dozen Americans found graves there.

Donop's men came into play on the Meredith farm, and several of the troops on both sides were killed or wounded. The high ground south of the Valley became the theater of action, and each commander arrayed his army for the clash. As the critical moment drew near the elements interposed.

It was a rich agricultural country in which the rival armies were about to contend for the mastery. The wheat had long since been garnered, but well set grass was occupying its place. Fields of tall Indian corn were seen on every hand, the stalks a little withered from the advance of the season and the lack of rain, and concealed beneath them were yellow pumpkins in profusion. The plenti-

ful woodland was burdened with foliage, to which the dense moisture of the morning seemed to impart new life and freshness.

The lowering skies began to weep. The wind that blew softly at first soon gathered strength, and gusts swept down upon the devoted heads of the waiting combatants. The porous, ruddy soil speedily succumbed to the watery wooing of the clouds, and the roads became a puddle, every impression, whether of the human foot or of a horse's hoof, being speedily filled with yellow water. The clover fields were so wet that the shoes of the soldiers were literally soaked, while from their headgear, mustaches, beards, noses, and eyelids little streams ran down upon weapons that could not be protected. The stalks of corn looked bedraggled, but not more so than the respective followers of Howe and Washington.

Woodland and clearing, road and field, fared alike. The water not merely dripped, but ran off tree and fence to the thirsty ground. The whish of the wind produced mournful notes in the forest; and here and there, under the rapidly increasing strength of the blast, trees were uprooted and thrown to the ground.

The aggressive Wayne made a personal inspection of the condition of things. The hillside was slippery, the mire deepening. What if the British should make an advance under such circumstances? The prospect was not reassuring, the general fearing that Procter would lose his artillery if attacked. Worst of all, the ammunition was almost spoiled.

The situation was truly critical. If an attack should be made by Howe, there could be little practical resistance. Washington recognized the embarrassment, and gave orders to change position, gradually withdrawing to the high hills in the rear of the "White Horse."

The hours wore on monotonously until four in the afternoon. The storm did not abate. It was clearly that disturbance of the elements which popular belief confidently ascribes, although without warrant, to the occurrence of the equinox, which was then close at hand. The Valley was flooded, the small streams it fostered having overflowed their banks; and sheets of rain concealed all but a small portion of it from the view of those who sought to penetrate its disguises.

Thereupon Washington gave the order to retire to the vicinity of the Yellow Springs, a group of waters slightly impregnated with minerals. It was a dreary march filled with discomfort, and the night brought no mitigation. In the morning the alarming discovery was made that not only was the supply of powder ruined, but that most of the gunlocks refused to perform their office; and so another march was undertaken to the furnace among the Warwick hills, where cannon had been cast for the army, and there some sort of replenishment in ammunition and arms was had.

None of these things, however, became known to Havard Brown, in his tree, because very soon after he took possession of his observatory the mist and rain hid the entire panorama from view.

## CHAPTER V

### A DIPLOMATIC DAY

IN spite of the weather, the British effected their change of base, constantly getting nearer the region of the Forge; and on Thursday all doubts as to their intentions were removed by the disposition of their forces along the Swedes' Ford road, the encampment resting on the southern rim of the Valley.

It was an imposing spectacle, to behold the column of veteran soldiers marching with precision on the floor of the charming vale, now washed from its dust and fresh as a rose garden. Light intrenchments were constructed at various points, and the available houses in the vicinity were impressed into service as headquarters for the general officers.

The incursion was readily viewable from Havard Brown's improvised observatory on Mount Joy; but there were some elevations on the other side of Valley Creek that furnished a viewpoint less tedious to attain by the feminine members of the various households, and some of these fair ladies almost forgot possible peril in the splendor of the scene upon which the sun was again gracious enough to shine.

The staid farmers above Walkerville were undergoing experiences of which they would fain have been relieved. Abel Reese was summoned from

the cellar, where he was constructing a potato bin, to meet a short, stout man in a general's uniform, who announced himself as the Earl Cornwallis. The sturdy tiller of the soil could not have conjured up a more unwelcome personage; still, the appearance of the dreaded officer was prepossessing. His face was attractive, and a slight grayish tinge of his hair invested it with a benevolent aspect. His manners were those of a perfect gentleman, and tended to relieve the family of their fears. The earl deprecated the fortunes of war, which compelled him to request the use of the farmhouse as his personal headquarters for a while—"not very long," he said with a smile, which the worthy farmer did not comprehend; but the titled soldier was indulging in a dream of a more congenial residence in the City of Brotherly Love at an early day.

At the James Jones homestead, a half mile or more to the east, Knyphausen politely took possession. The medium-sized, slender, straight German had sharp features, but his manners were affable. Yet the tidy housewife was amazed to see this soldier of high rank spread butter with his thumb-nail!

The same day also introduced a company of officers to the yard in front of the Samuel Jones residence, a field or two west of that of James Jones. In the background was a tall figure some six feet in height, well proportioned, and bearing a slight resemblance to that of the commander of the Continental army. It was quite a coincidence, for the



ABEL REESE'S (CORNWALLIS'S HEADQUARTERS)

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personage was none other than Sir William Howe, who, when the notice of appropriation had been served by his aid, came forward, to acknowledge "the courtesy of the family."

The encampment extended from the Baptist meeting-house to a point above Mary Howell's, and when the timidity of the Valley folk was somewhat spent they sallied forth to see the unique spectacle. The few grist-mills of the vicinity were at once pressed into service by the conquerors; among these was one on the Joseph Walker place.

Where was the American army? Should the British have undisputed possession of the Great Valley, with access to Philadelphia? The larger part of Washington's force was guarding the fords of the Schuylkill; Smallwood lay at the "White Horse"; and Wayne, with some fifteen hundred men and four cannon, was watching the enemy. It was supposed that at the first opportunity Howe would seek to slip across the river and enter Philadelphia, and Wayne expected to strike his rear divisions while on the march. One of the spies of the latter brought him word that this movement would come off on the morning of the twenty-first at two o'clock, and Wayne sent a messenger to Smallwood directing him to join him, with a view of making the desired attack. "Mad Anthony" had been within a half mile of the enemy's camp restless to strike; but, while the redcoats were cooking, and washing their clothes, they were in decidedly too great numbers safely to admit of an engagement.

Early in the afternoon of the twentieth Havard



Brown approached Knyphausen's lines in a rude conveyance containing a large cask. Stopped by the picket, he smiled, pointed to the cask, and uttered the single word "Sauerkraut!"

It was the "open sesame" of Ali Baba, and in a trice the young man was admitted, and surrounded by eager purchasers of the autumnal delicacy. The delighted Hessians wondered at the unusually early preparation of their favorite viand, and counted themselves happy to taste the new cabbage of the season. Some of their exclamations of pleasure were more forcible than reverent. The vendor felt it his duty to remonstrate with his rough customers, who looked fierce in their plaited hair and helmets; and this resulted in a wordy war, in which the theme changed to the questions at issue between the Colonies and the mother country. "Ach!" said the best linguist among them, "we beats de Yankees odder day, and drives dem away, so dat dey don't come back again. But all de same dere's some of dem not fery far away, and dey'll get in trouble soon enough."

The single disputant on the other side appeared to pay but slight attention to this remark, and to be absorbed in the disposal of his vegetable commodity; yet his response was such as to still further arouse his loquacious purchaser, who slowly shut one eye, looked very knowing, and continued significantly, "Wait till to-night, I dells you; dere'll be trouble ahead. You see if dere won't!"

If any curious eye was turned upon the farmer when he left the camp, it observed him lethargically

driving up the Swedes' Ford road to the cross-road leading to Saint Peter's, in which secluded locality the easy-going driver discovered a dell, where, out of the view of any person who might be traveling the road, he secured his ancient horse, and disappeared in the woods.

Two hours later a man in his prime made his way into the encampment of Wayne, and was at once ushered into the presence of the Pennsylvania brigadier.

The American troops detached to watch and harass the British rear were posted in a coppice two miles west of the "Paoli" inn. The utmost caution had been observed to conceal the encampment, for the service was perilous, in view of the great numerical superiority of the enemy. The place chosen was on a bit of table-land some distance from the road.

An unusual quiet prevailed in the camp, the result of stringent orders. The men were lounging about under the trees, talking in low tones; and the general was satisfied that entire success had attended his effort to preserve secrecy.

"Hello, Dewees," exclaimed General Wayne, "how did you get through the lines?"

The colonel saluted, and replied, "Well, general, it wasn't the easiest thing, I can tell you; but as luck would have it I managed to slip by the picket in the woods above the Warren. It doesn't often happen that one gets so good a chance."

"Did you see anything of Grey's men as you came through?"

"Not to-day, but I got a good squint at them yesterday afternoon; but I've been in Knyphausen's camp to-day—by proxy."

The response of the general expressed astonishment; and he commented, "You and your proxies will get your necks stretched one of these days, if you don't take care."

But, continuing in the surprised tone of his ejaculation, he inquired, "How did your proxy get into their camp?"

Deweese laughed and replied: "Havard Brown went to sell the Deutschers some sauerkraut; I knew they couldn't resist that. We had to be in a mighty hurry to pound it, though, and it wasn't anything like stale enough."

The general looked grave. "Deweese," he said at length, "you and that young fellow—he's a pretty likely one, by the way, I think—are running a big risk. Take care of yourselves, or else you'll dangle in the air from the end of an oak limb. But tell me, what did you gather? What do you know of the disposition of the British army?"

The colonel seized a pencil and piece of paper, and roughly sketched the Hessian encampment, locating the earthworks and pickets, the headquarters of each division commander, and the general arrangement of the British forces. He gave a pretty accurate estimate of their strength, and in short acquainted Wayne with about all the information that could possibly be accumulated by observation.

The general was accordingly grateful, and said

with spirit, "Colonel, I think we have them; they don't know we're in the neighborhood, and to-morrow when they move, as I expect, I'll strike them."

"General, I'm sorry to say they do know where you are; and I've come on purpose to warn you to be lynx-eyed."

The general seemed disconcerted. He was disposed to pooh-pooh Dewees's warning communication, but he recollected that there was no more trusty scout, and that he enjoyed the favor of Washington himself. After a moment's reflection he inquired of the colonel upon what he based his conclusions. Then his informant explained the circumstances of Brown's visit to Knyphausen's camp, his encounter with his garrulous Hessian customers and the telltale sentences that leaked out in the discussion.

Wayne's countenance now wore a grave expression, and sending for an aid, he gave orders to exercise redoubled vigilance. He directed that additional pickets and sentinels be stationed well out, and patrols pushed forward on the roads coming from the Valley.

Purposing putting additional cautionary arrangements into effect when night should ensue, the general turned his attention to Dewees once more, and inquired, "By the way, Colonel, what are you doing about your stores over there?"

"Well, up to within a week I had been feeling that all was right, but something's got into my bones that we are under suspicion, and I'm uneasy. Of course I shall keep a sharp eye on the reds; for if

they get scent of the stores, and mix me up in it, I'm done for—they'll clean out the place."

For some time the two patriots discussed the situation, but at length Dewees arose, and, saluting, said, "General, I'll have to be going. Pardon me for the remark, but I feel as though you are in great peril; I am almost satisfied that to-night will bring an attack."

"Thank you, Dewees, for your kindness. I hope it isn't so bad, but of course I'll be on the lookout. To-night I shall set a strong picket in every direction, and if they come they'll get a hot reception. I think I can take care of my men even if we get whipped; for all the country around here is home, you know."

"Yes, I'm sure if anyone can keep the British at their distance you will. What I fear is that some Tory in the neighborhood keeps Howe informed of what's going on and where you are. If that's the case it'll operate against your own familiarity with the locality. All those rascals know where Waynesborough is, and I have feared more than once that they'll try to nab you there."

"Never cook a hare till you catch him, Dewees," good-humoredly replied the general, "but at all events I'll look out carefully."

Wayne grasped his guest cordially by the hand and bade him farewell, and soon the colonel was pressing his way among the thick chestnuts toward the dell where Brown had left his horse and wagon. He succeeded in evading the British sentinel as dexterously as a few hours before, and in due time

he worked his way to the spot where the young man was awaiting him. Then both approached the place where the patient horse awaited the return of its master. They cast many a glance around, feeling more apprehensive now than at any other time. Nor was their caution ill-timed, for as they neared the vehicle they observed a man peering into the empty cask.

The colonel, who was naturally the leader, perceived that it was a person in civilian's dress who was thus making free. Whether to advance or remain hidden was the problem he now sought to solve. It might prove dangerous to reveal themselves; and, what was of more importance still, the military plans might be frustrated by an imprudent revelation. He concluded to try the mettle of the intruder by a feint.

But as he took a step in this direction the attentive ear of the stranger caught the movement, and without stopping to see who the person might be he scurried away.

Only once, as the man turned slightly to avoid an obstruction in his path, did Dewees catch a glimpse of him. "Why," he whispered to Brown, "that's Will Tyron, sure as I'm alive."

Havard led his beast out of its retreat into the road, descended into Cedar Hollow, climbed slowly up the North Valley Hill in a depression close to Diamond Rock, turned eastward over a secluded road where excavations had been made for stone and gravel, and, passing a number of charcoal pits, wended his way toward the Forge.

Threatening clouds urged the comrades forward along the rocky, rude wood road to the Valley Creek; but the superannuated horse, which had been chosen for the day's service to avoid suspicion, stumbled painfully among the ruts and rocks. It was almost dusk, and the travelers had barely escaped the breaking of a storm, when they reached home.

## CHAPTER VI

### A SCREED OF SCARLET

It was the evening of Saturday, the twentieth of September. The slowly deepening blue sky became suddenly overcast, and black clouds raced with fearful velocity down the Great Valley. An ominous white edging attended them; and the whirl of the wind was heard in the tree-tops that lined the rim of the vale. A lurid light enveloped all objects, causing uneasiness to beholders, while the roll of thunder swept hill and plain. The blue hills across the Schuylkill were speedily obliterated from the panorama, and a violent storm raged down that sinuous stream. Trees were uprooted in its major course, while their congeners on the Tredyffrin hills trembled, and paid tribute in the shape of innumerable twisted limbs and branches. Very little rain fell—perhaps but a few drops—but the majesty of the tempest made itself felt in both the British camp and that of its adversary.

General Wayne, more impressed with the prophecies of Colonel Dewees than he was willing to admit, made thorough preparations for repelling an hypothetical attack. Several new pickets were established, and a number of videttes were sent out to watch jealously the slightest movement of the enemy.



The troops had been ordered to sleep on their arms, their ammunition carefully shielded under their coats. The watchword had been imparted, and none who could not immediately pronounce, "Here we are, and there they go," was to be admitted within the lines. Thus constantly on the alert, they saw the early hours of the night pass by.

To pickets and videttes alike the evening was uncanny. The tempest, though comparatively stilled, occasionally fanned the recesses of the woods with its dying energies; and, to a superstitious soldier's ears, there were strange noises coming up the cool ravines, while the damps of the night brought a chill to his bones.

In the glen opening on the Lancaster road, some two miles west of the "Paoli," stood a picket whose vigilance was not suffered to relax despite the weirdness of the night. A brook, fed by two or three springs on the hillside, flowed at his feet and kept him company; for it reminded him of a dancing rill in the vicinity of his father's house. It was not so lonely, because he was familiar with the region, and knew some of its inhabitants. Had it not been for the proximity of the enemy he would have applied for a brief furlough to visit some friends at the Valley Forge. But that could not be in the presence of the foe. How he wished that the war were ended! Its hardships were extreme, and the outlook anything but encouraging.

He was in the midst of a muse upon his father's fireside when he detected a form stealing up the road, whereupon, bringing his piece to a "ready,"

he softly but firmly called, "Halt! Who goes there?"

Quite as mildly was the answer given, "A friend." "Advance, friend, and give the countersign!"

The figure came near, bearing something in one of its hands. It would have approached nearer still, but the picket sternly forbade, and insisted upon the countersign. Something in the tone of his voice produced a singular effect upon the obtruder, who inquired, "Is that you, Dick Epright?"

"Yes," answered the picket; "who are you?"

"Why, don't you know me—Tryon, your old playmate?"

And then Epright recognized the voice, and inquired what its owner was doing there. Tryon replied that he had been engaged by some of the boys to supply them with fresh cider from Peggy Hambleton's, and was going to meet them to deliver it.

The wily fellow endeavored to ingratiate himself with his old-time comrade sufficiently to procure the countersign, for without it he could not hope to pass other pickets; but, true to his duty as a soldier on guard, Epright refused either to pass him or furnish the important key. Tryon offered him the jug, but Epright declined to taste its contents, and bade him begone, with a rebuke about the impropriety of his act.

"If you were not an old neighbor, Will Tryon, I'd call for the officer of the guard, but you may go your way if you will leave the picket line altogether."

This Tryon promised, said "Good-night," and then stole away, as if to go home. But soon, wheeling about, he sought a more vulnerable avenue of approach for his nefarious purpose.

Alas! the very next picket he hailed—not the immediate neighbor of Epright—yielded to the seductions of the jug, whose contents—unintoxicating, of course, because expressed that very day—awoke thoughts of home and comradeship. The story was plausible, and as a man of the vicinity Tryon was given the precious secret, and permitted to pass. Within an hour he returned to the same spot, and after a little chat, in which he succeeded in gaining valuable information, he departed, apparently for his home.

It was past midnight. Such of the soldiers as were awake congratulated themselves that the threatened danger was also past. Drowsiness was upon nearly all but the sentinels. The faithful Epright down in the ravine, expecting to be relieved shortly, heard a sound that alarmed him. It was the trampling of human feet. Already upon his guard, he stood at his post manfully, and challenged the approaching party. One came forward, evidently an officer, who responded with the countersign. Epright was troubled; and the officer, as if he expected him to exhibit some embarrassment, hastily explained, "We're General Smallwood's party come to reinforce the camp, for a British attack is apprehended."

Epright involuntarily touched his cap, and the officer passed on.

How strange the whole thing seemed, thought the worthy sentinel. How could Smallwood be coming from the enemy's direction, without immense risk of being trapped—or had he been lucky enough to miss the British picket? He was bewildered, and these queries rapidly spun about in his brain. Should not he fire his gun and bring the corporal of the guard? He raised his piece for that purpose, when an agonizing pain seized him, and he tottered and fell to the ground—dead! A bayonet had been thrust into his heart, and his warm lifeblood gushed out on the damp soil of the ravine. "Relief" had come in strange guise.

A form turned away in horror lest in spite of the darkness it might witness the awful scene; a man averted his face and placed his hand upon his closed eyes to make assurance doubly sure. It was Will Tryon, who had been compelled to accompany the midnight detachment of General Grey, the "no flint" leader of night attacks. The British commander, at the head of three thousand veteran troops, had come up from Mary Howell's as noiselessly as possible, capturing all persons found along the Swedes' Ford road, in or out of a house, and compelling them to proceed with the soldiers, lest one should escape and give the alarm. The Long Ford road was reached, and a left wheel made for the "Admiral Warren," the same course being taken in the case of inmates of the premises; and now, with one gate open, there was abundant reason to hope that the raid would be successful. "Here we are, and there they go," did its work well. Every sentinel was

bayoneted where he stood, after the countersign was given; for the discharge of a single gun might bring the expedition to naught with such a man as Wayne for the opposing leader.

One wary picket, catching a glimpse of accouterments distinctly British, fired his gun, and the sound reverberated through the hollow, but, strangely enough, it did not effect a general firing of the guns of the picket; moreover, it could not penetrate to the encampment. The poor fellow bit the dust immediately afterward, a curse accompanying the vicious thrust that felled him.

Up through the glen crowded the exultant soldiers. Tyron led the way, which was familiar to him alone, himself under the constant scrutiny of an officer who would have run his sword through him if he had faltered in the slightest in his course, or evinced any suspicious tendency. He was harrowed with emotions. Loyalist that he was, the deadly meanness of the transaction overwhelmed him. The sale of his neighbors and their estates, the bargaining away of freedom and life almost suffocated him.

Hark! A gunshot, and then another—and another, very close at hand. The general had been sleeping but lightly—a soldier's ear is always ready to hear a signal. Wayne hurried out of his tent, and immediately formed his division. Relentlessly the silent host came on, Musgrove's command from near the "Paoli" closing in the eastern door of the Americans. Wayne himself said afterward that the British did some firing, but the main attack

was with the bayonet. In extreme haste the Pennsylvanians were drawn up by Colonel Humpton in the light of the campfires, and a capital aim was thus afforded the British marksmen. It was somewhat like the tornado of the afternoon, the way they marched up the little elevation. The onward rush swept away the feeble barrier, and men fell in all directions under the remorseless bayonet.

Many a deed of daring was done on that dreadful night. But perhaps none excelled the performance of the gallant general. Threatened by an advancing line of his enemies, he cleverly turned about his army cloak, which was lined with red, and thus resembling a British officer, dashed up to the line and commanded it to halt, actually gaining time for an important maneuver.

The general's skill and promptness averted a greater disaster. He directed Colonel Humpton to wheel the division, while he, with the light infantry, covered the retreat to a tenable position a short distance away.

The British did not pursue their advantage. Either they had had enough of carnage, or else they were afraid to venture into the presence of an aroused lion. Gathering up the spoils, burning the camp, and retiring with some seventy or eighty prisoners, they triumphantly marched back to their camp in the small hours of the holy day, rejoicing over their success.

The Sabbath sun, looking down through the branches of the forest trees upon the spot where the encampment had been, saw smoldering fires, and

heaps of camp equipage scattered in confusion; but it also saw more than a half hundred manly forms stark in death, and pools of gore everywhere.

A single soldier had hurriedly crept into a brush pile. An English bayonet was thrust into it once or twice, but it missed the trembling fellow, who escaped unharmed.

After the night of terror the people of the vicinity assembled upon the spot consecrated by the blood of patriots and buried the poor victims, whose bodies lay so thickly beneath the overarching trees. It was a day of mourning to the simple, peaceful folk.

At the same time a sergeant in the Hessian ranks was boasting to his companions who had not been detailed to the sickening work, of his own part in the shocking affair. He declared that while the Americans ran about barefooted, and half clothed, he had helped to kill three hundred of them with the bayonet, and that he "stuck them one after another until the blood ran out of the touchhole of his musket."

At the side of General Grey rode a young man of twenty-six, in the uniform of a captain—one of the handsomest figures in the entire British establishment. His mental endowments were of a high order, and he was equally facile in drawing pictures or writing rhymes. The Lancaster road was not unfamiliar to him, for his trained eye had taken note of its environment while traversing it as a prisoner. At Saint John's on the Sorel he had been captured by the gallant but ill-fated Montgomery, and sent to Lancaster.

What Captain John André thought as he acted as aid to the commander of the ruthless midnight raid will never be known. Doubtless, however, he sighed as he dwelt upon the darker features of war.

A universal expression of horror was extorted from the people of the vicinage, and some of them were ready on slight provocation to denounce to the British officers what they termed "a cold-blooded slaughter." The commander-in-chief was not spared in the reflections of the angry countryside, and received from his hosts a significant opinion of the affair.

"Why so grave, Miss Jones?" he inquired of Frances. "Your expression is unusually solemn." He little dreamed that his light and thoughtless remark would evoke so spirited a reply.

"It is time, General Howe, to be solemn, when our brothers' blood cries to us from the ground. We are in mourning for the noble men who were slain at midnight without chance to defend themselves."

"You allude to the attack on Wayne last night, I suppose; but you forget that this is but the fortune of war. Sometimes it falls to one side to endure defeat, and sometimes to the other."

"Yes, war is always horrible. I hate it with my whole soul, and do not see why it need be; but these poor men were fighting for their liberty, in a war thrust upon them by the king."

The courteous chieftain admired the fire in the eyes of the fair rebel, and sighed once or twice



before he ventured to say, "But, Miss Frances, your friends were in rebellion against the established authority, and they could expect nothing else but the use of violence to subject them to obedience to the laws."

"I suppose we should never agree about that, sir," said Frances; "but I have heard that there are rules in warfare that are observed by civilized nations. For instance, when men surrender they are taken prisoners, and not injured."

"True," said the general, "and this is the course his majesty's troops invariably pursue."

"But, General Howe, if reports be true, our poor men were killed with the bayonet even while they were pleading for mercy." The girl drew herself up disdainfully, and continued: "Some of them were sick; and even on their knees begged that their lives might be spared. I feel that they were *massacred!*"

The cheeks of the British commander mantled. It may have been partly from anger—the fearless girl was indisputably angry—it may have been from shame; but after a moment's hesitation he responded: "Miss Jones, believe me, nothing of the nature of a massacre is ever contemplated by a servant of George the Third. Humanity ever characterizes the officers of his armies. It is true that excesses are possible in the heat of passion and the excitement of the moment; besides, in a night attack unfortunate occurrences are less preventable than in the daylight. But be assured that if anything barbarous marred the engagement last night, it was involuntary."

But Frances was not appeased. The rumors which had reached her were too painful to be endured in silence, and the vision of the fallen in the corpse-strewn coppice nerved her to scathing words.

"I myself heard a brutal sergeant boasting of his bloody work, and laughing at the cries of his victims. He was using the grindstone to sharpen his bayonet, which he said had been dulled by striking so many bones."

"If you could point him out to me, Miss Jones, I would undertake to teach him a lesson he will not be likely to forget."

She responded with spirit: "There are too many like him, sir; besides I could scarcely be expected to hunt through the camp among men whose resemblance to each other is so strong."

The general was nettled; but he allowed his respect for the young woman to restrain him from any ungallant remark, and contented himself with gravely saying: "My dear young lady, you must not forget that war is war, and that it cannot be conducted on the exact principle of pure civilization. If people will shoot at each other somebody will be killed. In this case your feeling is aroused because your own countrymen have suffered, but to-morrow we may be the sufferers; will you then feel as you do now?"

It was a specious, searching question. But Frances was equal to the emergency. "I should be ashamed of the American commander who would suffer such a thing to happen; and I would

denounce him everywhere as a disgrace to his country and to civilization." Frances observed that the shaft struck deep, and, feeling that she might have been unjust to the general, she added: "Pardon me, sir, I do not mean to reflect upon you, although my words might seem to bear that construction. I believe that if you had been present last night you would not have permitted the massacre—for such I am compelled to term it."

The general looked relieved, and was grateful to the girl for her opinion of himself. He remarked, graciously, "I thank you, Miss Frances, for your kind personal words; I hope that I may prove worthy of them."

At the distance of more than a century and a quarter it is difficult to pronounce judgment upon the incident. To a large extent the bloodshed may have been unavoidable, the success of the attack depending upon the promptness of the tactics employed. It is probable, however, that the consensus of popular opinion relative to the affair will ever be signified by its usual historical caption, "The Paoli Massacre."

## CHAPTER VII

### A TUMULT IN TREDYFFRIN

HAVARD BROWN was fighting another sort of battle. It would seem utterly incongruous that the tender passion should develop amid such exciting scenes; but Havard was awaking to the recognition of a tempest swaying his own nature, and, though he philosophically impeached its genuineness, yet he returned to it so inevitably that he was at last compelled to admit that he was in love with Miss Ethel Thomson!

But what about Frances Jones? Had not Havard thought of her more frequently and intimately than one simply thinks of a fair neighbor? Of all the countryside there was none among the young girls whom he liked so well. While no explicit tender of affection had ever been made, there were times when his expressions of friendship had been significant, and when manner spoke louder than words. Often had he acted as her escort to the parties of the neighborhood, and oftener still had he visited her. There was something about her that pleased him immensely, and yet he could not have defined it. She was not a "beauty," and was innocent of the arts which are sometimes attributed to politic fair ones.

It was indeed a predicament. He did not ques-

tion his love for Ethel, apparently taking that for granted. And yet an obtruding, warning voice—whence did it spring?—reminded him of observations he had made regarding her. Now and then a trifle came to the surface in conversation that savored of self-love or a dearth of concern for others, a trace of vanity, perhaps—just a gleam.

But Ethel was unquestionably lovely to the eye. Art had heightened her natural charms until she became a picture. Her headdress made her face fairly captivating, her gowns dazzled the vision of the simple-hearted farmer, and her shapely hands exercised over him a magic spell.

Frances Jones—and Havard's thoughts would revert to her—was so different. Her needlework was excellent, and, unlike Ethel, she depended almost entirely upon domestic manufacture for her wardrobe. But her personal presence was not to be compared with that of the city girl. Constant service in the kitchen of a farmhouse interfered with those delicate charms which require release from manual toil to bring them to their highest perfection. Her fingers were marred with the pricking of the needle, or with the rough work of the dairy. Frances milked the cows, baked bread, made butter, swept and scrubbed, and sewed the most of the clothes used by the household. In all these respects she was a true artist, but of such homely things the dainty science of æsthetics takes no cognizance.

And yet Havard bore witness to himself that he had found it very pleasant to touch those serviceable little hands in assisting their possessor to dis-

mount from her horse. He could not recall a time when the sight of Frances had not given him real pleasure and brightened the hour; and, while it was easy to persuade himself that he was in love with Ethel, it was a little difficult to remove an impression that he had been affectionately inclined to Frances.

And what about Frances herself? Ah, noble girl, while upon such a theme the veil of her meditations would not be lifted, were it never so lightly, she did dwell at times upon the personality of Harvard Brown. True woman that she was, she could not but regard his character with approbation. Their lives had been so intertwined that she had the best of opportunities for estimating his real character and ambitions; and if there had sprung up a genuine affection for him the fact was complimentary to Harvard, for so discerning a spirit as hers would not have yielded the holy sentiment unless his personality had been built upon a satisfactory foundation of moral worth.

On the afternoon of the day of rest so fearfully desecrated by the sanguinary occurrences near the "Paoli," Mrs. Jones suggested to Frances that they go over to Abel Reese's for some homemade soap for the morrow's wash, the demands of the soldiers having exhausted both their own stock and that of Aunt Lydia. Taking a small basket, they crossed the fields to the westward, toward the whitewashed stone house of their neighbor. As they looked at the batteries crowning Mount Airy, and saw the sentinels parading beneath the tall trees, Mrs. Jones

sighed and uttered some plaintive sentences. She glanced timidly at the detachments occupying the high ground on their left, up against the woods along their own short road to Peggy Hambleton's corner, and said, "When will we be free from the presence of the king's army? Shall we ever be at peace again?"

Frances gently detained her while they were climbing a fence, and bade her rest a moment while they surveyed the scene, and then, assuming a cheerful tone, replied, "O, mother, it does seem hard that we must submit to this, but I hope that we will soon see the end of it. Besides, if the British can be kept out of the city, and the way of the Congress, it will be worth while to bear with them here."

The sentries along the path looked at the pair curiously, but did not disturb them until they neared the Reese house, which was then the headquarters of Earl Cornwallis. Here they were detained briefly, but were eventually permitted to call upon their neighbors.

Abel Reese's house stood in a small glen, and the barn was at its western side. The dwelling was a substantial structure, in which large pieces of stone abounded, and was built upon thick, staunch foundations. It had several diminutive windows on its various sides—some of them only large enough to permit the occupants to thrust their rifles through them to ward off an attack of Indians. Both the Reese and Jones families had a large collection of arrowheads, spearheads, fishing flints, and

battle-axes, picked up from time to time by the plowmen as they upturned the soil.

On the west gable of the house, in a sort of arched panel, was engraved the date of its erection—"1742." In front was a flagstone pavement, and the interior was divided into two downstairs rooms and three upper apartments. Poplar beams formed the ceilings. Some distance to the east of the house was an arched and sodded springhouse; where were kept certain table indispensables; and from which flowed a moderate run.

Into the living room to which the family was now practically confined the two ladies entered, and were cordially greeted, for neighborly courtesies were particularly appreciated during the British incursion. Naturally their remarks avoided any references to the disagreeable situation, for Cornwallis and his aids were in the front room.

The object of the errand was announced, and Mrs. Reese produced some blocks of soap, of which, happily, she still possessed a store, and then the company allowed themselves such chat as was proper under the circumstances.

Humor was not wanting, nor a bit of raillery, and the ladies chaffed each other about the humorous experiences of impromptu hospitality.

Miss Jennie Reese, a maiden of Frances's age, was very vivacious, and, being possessed of various items of rural gossip, generously spread her social board with them.

"Frances," she remarked, "you haven't been up at Saint Peter's lately. You won't know



what's going on in the world if you don't go to church."

"No," responded that young lady, "I have missed several services there, but I went with Betsy Ross—who was visiting us, you know—to Saint David's. She has some friends buried there, and felt like seeing their graves, so of course I took her over."

"Mr. Currie preached a right good sermon last Sunday; I don't remember just what it was about, but all said it was capital. By the way, Will Bull was up from the Ford, and Ethel Thomson with him. I hadn't seen her for a long time. She's just fascinating."

Frances was about to make some reply, but Jennie rattled on about Ethel's gown, and the putting up of her hair, and a string of minor matters, and whatever Frances would have said was thus lost.

Presently the gossip girl remarked: "Frances, you'll have to be looking out sharp, I can tell you. Do you know who was at church and went home with Ethel?"

Now Miss Jones became aware of an uneasiness. She was ready to chide herself because of it, and yet that did not affect the fact. But without any change of color, and with a smile that was perhaps just a little hypocritical, she calmly answered, "No."

"Well," said the lighthearted and mischievous girl, "it was just Havard Brown. Will Bull was with them out in the graveyard—I saw that while I was coming up to church; and when the service

was over Havard rode along with Will and Ethel down the Swedes' Ford road, and I just believe that he went home with them, for Harry Rossiter met them far below the 'King.' "

Frances tried to persuade herself that this was uninteresting; yet her womanly perception could not but recognize it as a speck upon the horizon which might or might not prove of importance. But with good sense she endeavored to dismiss the matter from her mind, by calling Jennie's attention to other themes. But the malicious young lady, who was shrewd enough to guess that the topic was embarrassing to Frances, persisted in reviving it, until with a woman's tact the latter turned the tables on her friend by referring to love affairs pertinent to herself, whereupon Jennie laughingly vacated the field.

The elder ladies had been discussing affairs less sentimental, and soon Mrs. Jones intimated that it was time to return home, and she and Frances prepared to resume the path in the fields. They had scarcely reached the foot of the little slope leading to the run, when they met Lord Cornwallis, who had been walking—probably for exercise—along the lines on the front hills. Very gracefully did he remove his chapeau, and with a profound bow remark, "Good afternoon, ladies."

The earl's name had not yet become so conspicuous as at a later day; yet his high rank induced Frances to scan his features and observe his manner, which was ingratiating. He seemed to be the embodiment of courtesy, and quite impressed his

youthful observer, who understood little of the qualities essential in the case of a military leader.

The earl paused deferentially, as though wishing to converse, and, when the ladies halted, remarked: "You have a most beautiful country; I have been examining it from these hills, and find it charming in the extreme. I congratulate you upon such an attractive home."

Mrs. Jones murmured some appreciative words, but Frances bravely took it upon herself to tell the earl that one of the very finest of views could be had on the road from Peggy's corner to Reese's lane, where the Forge hills came into full view; and that other pleasing viewpoints were on the other side of the Valley, on the North Valley Hill.

His lordship acknowledged the kindness of the information, but said, smilingly, "I must not venture so far away as the opposite points you name; for a very troublesome gentleman, named Mr. Washington, might prevent my speedy return to the shelter of these hills."

"I believe that we have the pleasure of addressing Lord Cornwallis?" inquiringly remarked Frances.

The earl bowed.

Frances's eye twinkled merrily—the earl, who was an acute observer, thought very finely—as she said, "I could indeed wish you, sir, the hospitality of General Washington."

The earl, far from being displeased, showed his appreciation of the girl's wit by a hearty laugh; and then spoke of the Continental commander in terms of high respect for his personal character.

The earl continued: "I regret that you should be subjected to experiences like these, which cannot but be annoying. Naturally, we view affairs in an entirely different light, for you are of the Colonies and I am a devoted servant of George III. But I could wish that the delicate matters involved in this quarrel between the mother and the daughter were settled, that peace might again reign."

Mrs. Jones devoutly acquiesced in this desire, but, thinking that perhaps the courtesy of the earl was detaining him against his convenience, now indicated her purpose to proceed; and once more the earl bowed, and, with expressions of pleasure at having met them, bade the ladies farewell.

It took but a little while to reach the gate that led into the yard of the Jones homestead, and the ladies soon found themselves occupied with the usual evening duties. To some extent perhaps the extraordinary environment dissipated certain unpleasantly obtrusive thoughts, but it must be admitted that Frances found herself reverting more than once or twice to the badinage of the flighty Miss Reese, relative to Havard Brown. "Pshaw," she soliloquized, "why should I pay any attention to the idle words of that busy girl? It was perfectly right for Havard to go to Bull's. He does not often get away from the farm. Besides, it was quite natural." But in her heart—that center of the soul where we rarely deceive ourselves—she found opposition to that last sentiment; it was *not* natural, she found the hidden monitor insisting.

## CHAPTER VIII

### FIRING A FORGE

THE stately hills between which Valley Creek in its last reach flows to the Schuylkill do not quite extend to the river—at least, their elevation breaks off rapidly on the northern side, leaving a strip of comparatively level ground at the mouth of the tributary.

Under the river bank, a little distance below the junction of the creek with the greater stream, a number of men were busily engaged upon an unusual task. A variety of beams and timbers was being fashioned into a species of raft, care being had to make it both light and substantial. The leader of the party was Colonel Dewees, and among his efficient assistants was Havard Brown. To any casual spectator it would have been patent that the proceeding was conducted with a view to the prevention of unnecessary publicity, for all who participated in the crude ship-joinery constantly stole uneasy glances about them, as though apprehensive that their work might meet an unfriendly or critical eye.

Nor did the workmen trust to their own survey of the river or the creek, for a small guard of Continentals was posted in such a fashion that an enemy could not approach without being seen.

Two persons hovered about the little company

who wore the uniform of officers. That they were fast friends, as well as comrades in special service, might have been inferred from their freedom in personal address.

"Colonel" (it was customary to bestow the full title upon a lieutenant-colonel), "you'll gain rank and fame as an amphibious Continental if you succeed in navigating this "Noah's ark" across the stormy Schuylkill. Have you laid in a supply of instruments for the voyage?"

The superior officer was quick at repartee: "Harry Lee," he said, "your own light horse shall be hitched to the craft, and made to pull it over to the haven."

But the quick eyes of Alexander Hamilton relaxed none of their vigilance because of banter. Over the stone house of Isaac Potts, across the clearing to the high timber, they roved perpetually, seeking any lurking spy or vidette intent upon discovery. In the same manner Captain Lee supplemented the service of the sentries, by peering along the creek, on both sides of the stream, to detect any human figures in the low woodland.

Fortune seemed to favor the daring, and the uncouth structure was about ready to receive its burden. Then a careful reconnoissance was made in all directions, while all who could be spared hastened to the Forge shed and the grist mill, in whose dusty bins precious army stores had been concealed. To transfer these to the raft was the duty of the hour, for a rumor was prevalent that the British purposed a thorough examination of the neighborhood.

It was not a sedate young Quaker selling sauerkraut, to whom information of the state was confided in the present case; but the peripatetic barber, who gained admission to the camp, and cut the hair of most of the life guard about the headquarters, could have told a very interesting tale of the connection between events had he been found; but it might have been noticed that when he was heard of anywhere Colonel Dewees was invariably missing, and when the latter was visible nothing was known of the barber.

As hurriedly as possible the work went forward. Considerable quantities of valuable goods were collected from bins and corners and chests and recesses, where they had been so cleverly concealed as not to excite suspicion upon the part of those who visited the Forge or the mill on business. For the first time the majority engaged in the work were made aware of the existence of the stores.

Crack! crack! upon the early afternoon air. A brace of musket shots rang out sharply and clearly; for the wind was from the south, a fact that Hamilton had already noted. The sound actually brought him relief; for he had been straining his sense of hearing to catch these very signals during the whole of the time consumed in the enterprise. It seemed almost miraculous that molestation by the enemy had been so long delayed. Two videttes had been posted on the southern slope of Mount Joy, with instructions to be vigilant in detecting the approach of a British scout, and it was their signals that gave notice of danger.

Strenuously the toilers bent to their task; the last load was taken to the raft, and the slow craft headed for the eastern shore of the Schuylkill, before the appearance of the foe. The videttes had reloaded, stationed themselves at a narrow pass in the road, and delivered a fire with sufficient effect to delay the progress of the enemy. Then, retiring upon their own party, they could only hastily report the apparent strength of the squadron to Hamilton before it was upon them. As the numbers of the British were superior to those of the Americans, the latter prudently dispersed, but not without firing a volley, which again retarded the advance of the squadron. But in a few moments a second party, which had come circuitously over Mount Misery, swept down the ravine to the creek, across to the Forge, and proceeded to join the first detachment. It was a mystery to the patriots in general how this obscure route became known to the enemy, thus enabling them to effect so timely a junction; but the iron-master had picked up enough information through secret channels to convince him of the complicity of Will Tryon.

It was Hamilton's object to divert attention from the raft, which as yet had not attracted the notice of the British. Signaling his men to wheel up the hill on the down-river road, he drew after him the united British force. It was not possible to reach the ford at Fatland and escape to the other side, for the chase was hot; and Hamilton and Lee, hastily conferring, concluded to retreat down a lane to the rear of Mount Joy.



The enemy's pursuit at this point lost some of its vigor, as they were suspicious of an ambush; and while they halted and debated a dragoon caught sight of the raft, now well on its way to the eastern bank. At once the squadron wheeled about and fired at the receding craft. The pattering of bullets about the ears of the polers showed that they were within range; but the only loss sustained was that of a horse belonging to Colonel Dewees. Before another volley could be given the unwieldy vessel was guided into a little sheltered bay or indentation in the shore.

Baffled of their principal prey—for it was the capture of the munitions of war that drew them to the vicinity of the Forge—the troopers debated the propriety of searching for the mounted Americans. But the officer in charge determined to examine instead houses and other buildings in which stores might be concealed. Drawing from his pocket a map, he made a mental note of three or four residences, looked about him for certain landmarks, and then led his men to the sack.

The information of the marauders must have been accurate, for, while effectually ravaging the entire settlement, their chief spite was directed upon the Waters homestead. Thomas Waters was the father of Mrs. Dewees, and a member of the rafting party. Upon him were visited some of the sins of his son-in-law.

The devastation of property in general was very great, and evoked deep maledictions upon the heads of the ruthless band, who in some cases spared nothing in the wreaking of their vengeance and cupidity.

Great age had not yet invested the well-built stone grist-mill that stood on the banks of Valley Creek, near the river. Its wheels rumbled on in "a sort of runic rhyme," not exactly melodious, and yet affording an agreeable clack to the rustic ear. The dusty miller with his bags and block-and-fall was highly picturesque. A small corner had been roughly boarded off for an office, and the mill boy found gratification in placarding the walls with rude woodcuts.

The hasty exit of the patriots had left the mill tenantless. Its wheels were idle, its doors open, and a general air of guilt hung about it to the eyes of the invaders. Perhaps, could it have been heard—or rather understood—in a renewed rumble, it would have declared its pride in its service to the American Republic.

A half mile up the creek was the Forge, destined to become immortal. The sooty stone walls, the capacious chimney, the ponderous hammer, the cheerful glow when the iron brought down from Warwick, and made white-hot in the charcoal furnaces, was transferred to the massive anvil to be beaten into tough fiber, the roar of the bellows—all these together invested "the Valley Forge" with a conspicuous *locale*, and evoked a species of rough affection for the grim and grimy workshop of Vulcan.

One could imagine that between the Forge and the mill existed a certain tender attachment. Lovely and pleasant had they been in their lives, and now in death they should not be divided. No, for even then

the avenger was upon their thresholds. The mill was able to display its generosity even in its death throes; for there still remained sufficient meal and unground grain to sweeten the supper of many a British soldier, while the Forge had in it many tools that were eagerly snatched by foreign hands. The work of demolition began, and the demon, having become aroused, grew reckless; and costly machinery was ruined utterly and hopelessly, with abundant curses upon the fugitive colonel.

Soon everything was ready for the application of the torch, and the two structures were fired. In the mill the wooden framework and floors and bins were dry and highly inflammable; and the tongues of flame ran and leaped and twirled, until they aspired to the roof, whence they soon issued with such roar and blast that the scene, but for its wantonness, might have been termed sublime. Every window was wreathed in scarlet; and the body of flame was so intense, that the surrounding trees were charred.

It was much the same with the iron workshop, only it was not so completely furnished with woodwork. Yet the framing, the floor overhead and the roof furnished fair competition in providing a blaze. The few farmers who were present stood at a respectful distance viewing the catastrophe, and lamenting silently at the fate of these industries. It was only one of a thousand instances where patriotism sacrificed freely to attest its fidelity.

At last, their revenge and cupidity having been fairly glutted, and it being by no means certain that

some of the adventurous Yankees would not be found stealing upon their flank, the band that burned the Forge prepared to follow the steps of those that had driven off the stock of the farmers. Little did they guess that their actions had been closely watched by the little guard of light horse they had first encountered.

The rafting party, safe from molestation on the eastern shore, observed some of the doings of their adversaries. The burning gristmill was in full view, and the dense smoke that rose behind it, between the folds of the ravine, proclaimed to Colonel Dewees the fate of the Forge. However painful the spectacle, it was borne with his unfailing philosophy. His loss amounted to eleven thousand dollars!

## CHAPTER IX

### LOYALTY AND LOVE

HOWE and Washington had been playing at checkers, and the former had succeeded in crowning a man, while blinding the eyes of the latter with a subordinate move. The wily Englishman, pretending to have a design on the Continental depot at Reading, marched his army up the west bank of the Schuylkill, whereupon Washington, moving on a much longer line on the east bank, attempted to anticipate him. Then the redcoats turned rapidly downstream, and on September twenty-third, at Gordon's Ford<sup>1</sup> and Fatland Ford,<sup>2</sup> crossed their Rubicon, and, presto! the Quaker City was theirs.

The depredations at the Forge did not comprise all the evil wrought by foraging parties and scouts of the royal army. Down the Swedes' Ford road these birds of ill omen moved, intent upon plunder and the apprehension of militiamen, and everywhere the baleful influence of some secret ally was discernible. They paused to drink the liquors in the cellar of the "King of Prussia." Thence they wandered to the "Bird in Hand" and the Gulph. Others scoured the country below the mouth of Valley Creek, while the eastern shore of the Schuylkill was by no means overlooked.

As after the disposal of the cargo of the raft it

<sup>1</sup> Phoenixville

<sup>2</sup> Valley Forge

was deemed best that the crew should separate, and each man look out for himself, Havard Brown determined to work his way down the river to the Swedes' Ford; and, gathering such information as he could, he prepared to take advantage of an opportunity to cross unmolested. At worst he could pick his way over Fatland Ford in the darkness of the night.

How strangely war and love are blended in human experience! Havard had another reason for turning his gaze downstream—Miss Ethel Thomson was probably at her uncle Archibald's; and, as the political sentiments of that gentleman were decidedly repugnant to the royalists, there was little doubt that a heavy hand would be laid upon one who bore a colonel's commission in the militia.

The mansion and inn of Colonel Thomson occupied a site on a high ridge, three or four miles northwest of the Swedes' Ford. It was invariably cool in summer, offering its guests a pleasant retreat from the heat of the city. Miss Thomson divided her visit between her uncle's and the home of her aunt, Mrs. Bull, which was within a mile of the Ford, and on the banks of Stony Creek.

Havard was undecided about visiting the young lady in his present plight, for there was no opportunity to make himself presentable; and yet, on the other hand, he did not wish to return home without some knowledge of events in that quarter.

Considerable woodland was to be traversed, and the position of the Thomson mansion was obscured; but when the now self-confessed lover attained a

spot whence a distant view of the premises could be had, he saw, to his alarm and consternation, volumes of smoke ascending from the roof and bursting out at the windows.

Calm and self-possessed as Havard usually was, he broke out into a bitter execration of the cruelty of the spirit of war; and at that particular moment he might have wrought severe retaliation if the means had been within reach.

Though renewed caution was imperatively necessary, Havard purposed a thorough inquiry into the condition of affairs. Stealing along the road with eyes before and behind him, alternately, he studied every suspicious turn and possible hiding place. He crossed two or three transverse ravines, where he half feared he should come upon enemies, but for a full quarter of an hour detected no signs of danger.

But at the next turn he saw a sight that caused his heart to rise to his mouth, and brought a curious feeling to the roots of his hair. A pillaging band, apparently intently searching for some object, was coming along the highway. To leap into the woods was Havard's first impulse, and he immediately obeyed it, plunging deep in the shadows, and rather irresolutely descending a slope to a thicket, in which he would have hidden—but he immediately recoiled, startled at the apparition of a fold of scarlet. Havard expected that a gleaming bayonet would be protruded, or a stream of flame announce the watchfulness of a redcoat, but he determined not to be taken by a single man. The next moment he found himself face to face with Ethel Thomson!

The surprise was mutual and great. Ethel at once recognized the intruder, and, forgetful of the surroundings, Havard would have expressed his supreme satisfaction at seeing her; but she quickly put her finger on her lips and motioned silence. Still, she extended her hand, which, in the excitement of the moment, presumably, he pressed nervously.

Mayhap she did not notice that, for she pointed up the hill, and whispered, "They're after me, and are right close. I fear that they'll find us yet."

"O, Mr. Brown," she continued tearfully, "the wretches surprised us, when uncle was away from home, and robbed aunt of all the money they could find, and then threatened to beat her unless she would furnish more. She had to give them all her jewelry, and then they spread through the house, ruining everything. At last they set fire to the dear old home, and drove us out; and when they got the stock and the grain out of the barn they burned that, too. O, it's dreadful!"

"But where is your aunt?"

"I got separated from her in the smoke and confusion, and—and—some of the soldiers were drunk and behaved rudely to me, and I ran away. Poor aunt, I wonder how she fared!"

Havard hardly knew what to say or do. He might take Ethel home to his mother, but it would never do to leave her aunt to the mercy of intoxicated and brutal men.

"Miss Thomson," he inquired softly, "would it not be best for me to seek the officer—officers are mostly gentlemen—and put you in his care?"



But Ethel shook her head, while a look of deep repugnance spread over her face. "Not for all the world," she replied, shuddering; "it was he who insulted me, and he is grossly intoxicated."

Havard's first hope grew brighter. "I will be frank with you, Miss Ethel; I meant from the first to take you home to my mother; only I felt that I ought to see what could be done for your aunt. I have it; I will reconnoiter about the house, while you stay in this thicket. Be sure to keep your cape hidden—I took it to be a uniform—and I'll be back very soon. If you should be discovered whoop three times, and I'll come at once."

Havard could not forbear pressing her hand again, when he noiselessly left her side; and the young lady, somewhat restored to presence of mind, noticed the warmth of the act, if one could judge from a bit of color that tinged her cheek. But perhaps she attributed it to Havard's flurried condition!

The latter made his way to the top of a knoll, but sufficiently under cover of the woods to avoid being discovered by the party in the road; although these were so drunk that they were practically helpless. Passing on farther, he came to a point where he secured a fair view of the house; and to his great relief noticed that Mrs. Thomson was not only unharmed, but was under the protection of a royalist relative.

When Havard returned to Ethel's side, and told her what he had learned, she expressed her purpose to accompany him home, only regretting that her aunt would have to be worried about her safety for

a little while. "Still," she said, "she will expect that I went over to Corson's, for we talked about it this very morning; besides, nothing would induce me to go back among those villains again."

The young man was overjoyed. What pride he took in piloting her away from the dangerous locality, through the woods, often within sight of the river, which supplied a pleasing vista through the trees. Ah me, how love ripens with such a background!

Havard had made up his mind that whether a British guard was stationed about Fatland Ford or not, he would cross it with Ethel. There was small likelihood that they would be molested, and, in truth, it was the only feasible plan.

Having arrived at this conclusion—which also embraced the prospect of a meeting with his mother sometime that night—he roved for a few fleeting hours the Islands of the Blessed! Ethel was not left to guesses as to the state of mind of her providential escort, and before they emerged from the leafy shade of the river woodland, the shy, restrained, philosophical Havard had made an avowal of his affection.

It was truly a day of great surprises to Ethel, but as regarded Havard's declaration of love her intuition had put her slightly on guard; so that, while the profession was certainly made much earlier than she dreamed, it was not totally bewildering.

Whether or not a corresponding regard had sprung up in Ethel's heart may be left to the reader to determine. Few young women would have

treated a young man like Havard Brown lightly. His character would have secured him respect and deference; and his tall figure, unconventionally but neatly attired, showed a face in which mental and moral strength and kindness of heart were strongly marked.

These things had made an impression upon Ethel. The manliness of the young farmer had struck her at their first meeting, and had been emphasized at the interview in Saint Peter's churchyard. The afternoon at her uncle's had deepened the impression, while the events of the present day magnified it immeasurably. She was keen enough to perceive that her rescue by Havard was not an accident, for he had unquestionably been drawn to the scene of pillage by his devotion to herself.

Ethel could not be expected to decide so important a matter in such haste. Mr. Brown would see that it was a very great surprise, and that several things would need attention and consideration before she could determine. She appreciated so estimable an offer, and yet it were wiser to permit a little season of delay in order to think it over. Thus the young girl parried the momentous proposal.

But Ethel reckoned without her lover. The bashful, quiet man became importunate, and then, naturally, he became eloquent. He scarcely knew himself, so fervid was his pleading. In fact, his auditor was astonished—and proud! There was a realism in the circumstance that contributed an unusual spice to the occasion. Neither of the chief personages of the chapter had had recent opportunity

to eat a morsel of food; and thus hunger flavored this romantic wooing, and affected for weal or for woe the decision of the fair one. At last Ethel, moved by the intense expressions of this remarkable and resistless suitor, intimated that she would give favorable consideration to the suit.

This crumb made Havard radiantly happy, and he painted Ethel's final answer in the most roseate of hues. But now our hero was obliged to pay attention to the method of crossing the Schuylkill. He recollected that a boat was usually kept in a little cove on the eastern shore, some distance below the mouth of Valley Creek. If this could not be found, nor any other means of ferriage, he was sure, giving rein to his imagination, that he could carry Ethel across the stream at the ford. This would be as romantic an incident as true love ever embraced, to be sure; but fortunately the boat was found, and Havard rowed it across the river, its fair passenger sitting in the stern.

The evening was now well advanced. Luna in her first quarter was riding through cirrus clouds. Vega was on the meridian and nearly overhead; the Northern Cross and the Eagle near by; and in the east the Great Square of Pegasus was halfway up from the horizon. Here and there the brighter stars of other constellations shone through the cloudy veil, and in the north the outlines of the Dipper were visible below and west of the pole.

It was just such a scene as must entrance a hopeful lover; and into this character Havard seemed to have been suddenly and mysteriously trans-

formed. The bewitching sky above and the bewitching girl in the boat exercised a spell upon him, and evoked the poetic in his nature. He seemed to have forgotten the peril of the day, and to have ignored the uncertainties of the night.

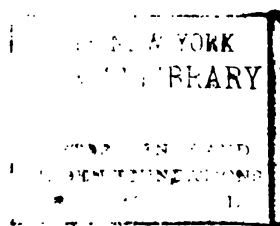
The little island they passed was silvery in the moonlight, but its trees cast dense shadows that lent weirdness to the spectacle. The light waves produced by the movement of the oars reflected the glancing of the moon on a myriad gleaming ripples.

As they reached the western shore its shadows disclosed no enemy, single or plural, waiting to dispute their landing; and when Havard had carefully secured the boat to a stout sapling that grew by the water's edge he took a route perfectly familiar to him on fishing excursions when a mere lad—up over the hill, across the river road, on through woods to the Gulph road, thence to the heights of Mount Joy, and then down to the comfortable home on its southern side, where he was delighted to see a lamp burning in the window. It was but a little while before he was clasped in the arms of his mother.

What the mystification of Mrs. Brown was, when she noticed the graceful figure and beautiful face of Ethel Thomson, may be imagined. But she waited in patient dignity until Havard introduced the young lady and explained the circumstance. The most cordial of welcomes was given, and then Mrs. Brown proceeded to prepare a substantial supper. Ethel noticed how neat all the table furniture was, and tasted with satisfaction the simple dishes.



HOME OF HAVARD BROWN (GENERAL KNOX'S HEADQUARTERS)



It took a long time to recount the experiences of the day on both sides. Mrs. Brown had been troubled at Havard's absence; yet she thought his share in the care of the stores was so little known, if at all, that he would not be in much danger therefrom. The British had not passed them by in their general visitation, and the farm had been made to contribute freely of its stock and products to the predatory bands. She relieved her son's solicitude by explaining that no indignities had been shown her; and that nothing had occurred to cause her any personal alarm.

It had been remarked that Havard was a philosopher. The soldiers had carried away valuable effects, and he had lost Saladin, but he was grateful to Providence that the torch had not been brought into requisition. Besides he was disposed to find present and great solace in the fact of Ethel's presence, brought about so singularly. What a favor, to have her so near, where he could feast his eyes upon her, hear her voice, and bask in her radiance in general! He realized that very soon word must be got to her friends, and that she would probably insist upon returning home on the morrow; but the interval should be a season of refreshing, of which he would cherish every moment.

Mrs. Brown was seated at the tea table with her face turned toward the rear kitchen window, when she gave a start, which in turn alarmed her son. Divining that something that she had seen had frightened her, he turned about, but perceived nothing.



"What's wrong, mother?" he inquired, quickly.

"O," answered she, "I saw a face at the window!"

Havard ran to the door and gazed into the darkness, but nothing met his eye except the familiar trees, and the domestic articles scattered about the yard by the marauders. He explored the yard quite thoroughly, looked into the barnyard and the road, but saw no person. The moon was still shedding its gentle light upon the eastern hills, but it was now behind Mount Misery, and the gates of the gap were only semi-visible. The smell of burnt wood was very noticeable, but there was not even a dull glare above the sites of the ill-fated forge and mill.

He could but return into the house with the report that he had seen no person, and was inclined to think that his mother had been nervously unstrung by the happenings of the day, and that she had imagined the face. He was too courteous to suggest this surmise, but his questions conveyed a hint of it to her. She mildly said:

"Havard, I saw a man's face at the window. It was not close against the pane, and I think the fellow supposed it could not be seen at the distance he kept it; but I am sure that it was the face of a man."

"Perhaps, mother, you can tell if it was that of a stranger, or whether it resembled a face known to us."

"I cannot tell whose it was; but it bore a strong resemblance to a face we know."

Quite aroused, Havard bent toward his mother, and inquired, "Whose?"

"Mind, I cannot say certainly, for resemblances go astray very often, but the features were exceedingly like those of William Tryon."

Now indeed was Havard electrified; and there flashed upon him the recollection that he had fancied a figure hovering about the landing place of the boat that evening, which he had dismissed from his mind, because he saw it no more.

He was puzzled to know what it could mean. That there were grave doubts of Tryon's loyalty to the Colonial cause Havard was well aware; sinister rumors had spread relative to his connection with certain information secured by the British, but granting that they were true, there was something very strange in this nocturnal and secret, prying visit.

Havard's eyes were not long off Ethel's face, and while he was stealing a glance at it during this conversation he thought he recognized a meaning expression on it—if not indeed a faint smile.

A lover's eyes, though often blind, are sometimes keen, and Havard asked Ethel what was passing in her mind. She evaded the query, which made him still more curious. Again she parried the inquiry, but it escaped her at last that she knew Tryon quite well, and could have recognized him had she seen the face at the window.

Havard's perceptions became more acute. "Possibly," he thought, "he has been a suitor of hers!" And Havard was jealous.

Perhaps Ethel thought it scarcely seemly to tell of Tryon's attentions, but Havard managed to infer,

from the little she hinted, that Tryon had sought her favor.

But the sensations of the evening were not yet ended. A half hour after the incident a tap was heard at the kitchen door, and when it was opened there stepped into the room, to the especial astonishment of Havard Brown, the person of Colonel Alexander Hamilton.

"So it was you who looked in at the window, was it, Colonel?"

The officer smiled. "No," replied he, "at least not at the time to which I presume you refer."

Havard recovered from his amazement sufficiently to introduce his guest to his mother and Miss Thomson, both of whom received him with quiet grace, and then resumed his inquiries.

"We have been concealed to-day in the enemy's land," said Hamilton. "There was no way of escape after the dragoons came down on us in such force, and they have been scouring the whole country. We saw the burning of the forge and the mill from yonder high hill."

Mrs. Brown exclaimed that she had noticed moving forms near that spot from which her son had sought to view the battle ground of the previous week, but she had taken them to be those of the enemy looking for more victims.

The colonel explained that his little band had kept vigilant watch upon the movements of the various groups of the British during the day, and that the coming across the river of Havard and Miss Thomson was known to them, as also the presence of a

stranger near the stream. The latter had been followed because his movements were suspicious, and he had been seen to look in at the kitchen window. Havard's search had also been observed, but it was deemed best to follow the spy, if spy he was, to a thoroughly safe distance before making any disclosures. This had been done, and the scout had returned, reporting the fellow far on his way to the eastward.

Mrs. Brown hospitably invited the colonel to remain for the night. But that officer explained that it was necessary to cross the river and rejoin Washington before the enemy could prevent. If the crossing were unguarded by the British to-night, as he thought it was from his reconnoitering, he would get his detachment across. But he gratefully ate the supper which Mrs. Brown hurriedly provided.

Havard suggested the boat in which he had brought Ethel from the opposite shore; but Hamilton responded that he would try the ford, in view of the fact that they were mounted and had some baggage.

An hour later—it was now midnight, and the moon had sunk behind the Schuylkill hills—a little company of horsemen pierced the river shadows at Fatland Ford, and passed safely over into liberty.

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## CHAPTER X

### A TALE OF TRESPASS

THE morning uncurtained new thoughts. Mrs. Brown and her son were brought face to face with the realities of the situation. The stock had vanished, Havard's much prized Saladin included. The barn had been practically emptied of its contents, the whole constituting a heavy loss. Fortunately, the fall seeding had been accomplished, and a rick of hay remained undisturbed, while one cow at pasture in a secluded field had been overlooked.

Foreseeing the possibility of such a calamitous circumstance, Havard had taken care to secrete a sum of money sufficient to temporarily reassure him and his mother in time of need. It was in shining guineas, and was hidden in a hole in the foundation of the house. Even the burning of the premises could not have endangered the treasure, for the cellar rocks were of remarkable thickness, and the receptacle was cunningly concealed from view.

At breakfast the abnormal doings of the day previous were not so fully discussed, with the consequence that both Havard and Ethel—now necessarily more self-conscious—were somewhat embarrassed. Mrs. Brown perhaps became a factor in producing this feeling.

"Do you think that it will be safe to attempt to

go home to Uncle John Bull's to-day?" asked Ethel of Havard before the meal had proceeded far.

Havard was disposed to prolong a stay so agreeable to him as much as possible, and responded that there might be troops lingering in the neighborhood who would give them annoyance, possibly the very band that had behaved so rudely yesterday.

Ethel, feeling that her friends would be in a great fright concerning her safety, appeared so determined to make the effort, that Mrs. Brown came to her rescue, and advised that Havard take some steps toward ascertaining the actual state of affairs.

The sound of iron-shod hoofs was heard on the stones outside, and when Havard rose to learn the cause, his heart sinking at the prospect of meeting some redcoats, to his unfeigned pleasure he saw Saladin, saddled and bridled, but with broken rein and riderless. Whence he had come could not be ascertained, of course, but the horse received a welcome that was almost an ovation. He came up to his master with eagerness, as though his intelligent brain comprehended it all, rubbed his nose upon Havard's face, and whinnied in superlative delight.

The animal had doubtless been out all night, and as burs were attached to his unkempt hide Havard supposed he had broken away on the other side of the river, while picketed, and found his way through rough country to the Swedes' Ford, crossing there early in the morning.

Havard noticed that the saddle was of fine workmanship, and the saddlebags plump. He did not hesitate to open the latter, in which he found some

papers and a substantial sum of money, which, if not reclaimed, would partially compensate him for his losses.

He was astonished to discover that the papers consisted of memoranda of the settlement, the location of certain houses, names of property owners, and data regarding each that none but a resident could furnish. No name was signed, but Havard fancied that he could identify the penmanship. Nor was it any impeachment of his conclusions, when, later, he found a letter referring to the information that "Tryon" had supplied, and its reliability. "Enough to hang him, if Washington knew it," he said to himself.

It was bitter to believe that a man could turn upon his neighbors after this fashion. Havard was just, and conceded to everyone the right to think and conclude upon the question of loyalty to the Crown. He found no fault with his neighbor for his Tory principles, but could not comprehend how he could become an informer upon those whom he had known from childhood. Into this analysis did not enter the feature of personal relationship with reference to Ethel, although Havard could not help wondering if that increased Tryon's enmity to him.

As Ethel insisted upon going to Colonel Bull's, Havard made such preparations as were necessary. He knew no other plan than to put his mother's saddle on Saladin for the fair traveler, and to walk at her side—unless she would occupy a pillion behind him. But Ethel stoutly persisted in walking, for she feared that the petted horse was in danger of

being retaken. She trusted that some mode of transit of the ford would turn up.

But Ethel was not destined to essay her pedestrian powers that day, because of the communication of a peddler to whom both Mrs. Brown and her son paid respectful attention.

Heinrich Kichenheim, merchant, bore upon his back a pack which would have been the despair of an ordinary man; yet, though he perspired freely, and constantly wiped his brow with a red handkerchief, he carried it cheerfully.

"Goot mornings, Miss Brown; it was wery hot to-day efen in the shade of the pig oaks!"

Mrs. Brown smiled and said: "Yes, the day promises to be quite warm before we get through with it. What has thee to-day in the way of tempting things?"

"Efferytings, Miss Brown, that a person needs for a house. Combs, brushes, looking-glasses, shaving muks, buttins, thread, needles, pins, pocketbooks, handkerchiefs, linen, tablecloths, covers, shoes, tinware, caps, scissors, shawls, ruks, stockings, knives—most anydings you want."

"But, Friend Kichenheim (she pronounced it Kickenheim), how are we to pay for goods now, since the soldiers have taken all we have?"

"Yah, yah," responded the honest peddler, "I know dat you have suffered mooch yesterday; it was bad, bad, indeed. But den you haf not suffered so much as some odders. Dere was Squire Bull, he was purned out yesterday, and all his goots go away mit dem soldiers."



Havard pricked up his ears, looked at his mother, and then at Ethel, who had not caught the remark.

"What, has Squire Bull been hurt?"

"Ach, no, not de squire himself, because he no stay at home to be hurt; he clear himself away before de British come, but dey burn his house and barn, and dey carry away all de stock mit dem."

Ethel comprehended, and this fact annihilated the possibility of finding refuge at her aunt's.

Very thoughtfully Mrs. Brown inquired, "Where are the family?"

The peddler answered, "Dey are gone oop to de Treppe, to de old prediger Muhlenberg's, where de Thomson family too is gone. Dey were, too, burned out yesterday, but some neighbors took dem oop dere, all but de young lady as wisited dem from Philadelphia. She runned ofd to de nachbar's, to get out of de road of de scamps."

The itinerant merchant was a reliable encyclopedia on all subjects that related to the countryside. His statements were invariably accepted, because he was careful to obtain credible data and transmit it as particularly.

Havard was sure that if there had been any anxious concern entertained about Ethel by her uncle's family it would have been circulated, and the peddler would have mentioned it; but he inquired still further of the man of the pack, who responded that it was expected by the family that Ethel would return to the city with the Corsons, the friends with whom she had taken shelter, and who often went to town. For the present, he said, the road on the

other side of the river was occupied by the soldiers, and that there would be scarcely any use of it by civilians until the army found quarters in town.

So it eventuated that Ethel was obliged to spend a few days in the home of her lover.

The good peddler was made happy by the sale of some household articles, and, rearranging his pack, took up his line of march for the Potts house, down the creek.

But Havard escorted him to the road, and held a long confidential conversation with him, in which the name of Tryon could have been distinguished by one close at his elbow. The peddler declared that Tryon aided and abetted the enemy, for he had had his eye upon him for some time; and as he visited the British camp with impunity, to sell his wares, he had personally seen him in close consultation with leading officers.

There seemed to be no doubt of Tryon's guilt—unless, as Havard charitably conceived, he might be an agent of Washington in disguise. But Havard determined to keep his thoughts to himself, lest they might do harm.

It need not be said that he did not regard it as an unfavorable dispensation that permitted him to enjoy several days more of Ethel's society.

His mother could not but observe the state of affairs. In a sense it was not a surprise, for it was to be expected—yes, it was to be hoped—that Havard would some time "fall in love." But the suddenness did surprise her. Having come to mature

years, when she could distinguish the glamour and glitter from the substantials, she had come to expect that her son would be gifted with the same discretion. She forgot the impulsiveness of youth, and the power of a first affection.

She was all kindness to Ethel, and yet she did not know what to decide about her. That the girl was lovely in person there could be no denial. In fact, to the eye she was faultless. And yet Mrs. Brown wondered if she were altogether suited to Havard. They had been brought up in different channels of thought, with variant likings and leanings—that was very evident. The ways of the fashion-world were attractive to Ethel, the deeper things of life had not yet fastened upon her. True, maturity and experience might confer a taste for them, but to commence a union under such circumstances was not auspicious—so mused the motherly heart.

It was but a little while, to be sure, that Ethel spent beneath the roof of the Browns, and one needed a longer period to pass upon so grave a matter. But Ethel herself evinced so little of that tender regard that we call love that Mrs. Brown was perplexed. Her son's manner left no room for doubt as to the status of the case as far as it related to him; but Mrs. Brown could perceive no deep answering tone in the words or conduct of Ethel.

However, that was perhaps to develop more slowly. Havard had evidently been in a hurry to exhibit his preference—for Mrs. Brown could not recall any instance of their meeting previous to that Sunday at Saint Peter's. Maybe Ethel's love—if

it unfolded at all—would be all the richer and more enduring for its slow growth.

But there was another factor in Mrs. Brown's philosophy. She had almost counted it as a certainty that Frances Jones would become her daughter some day. She was an admirer of this lovable girl, and having known her from infancy was well acquainted with the fixed traits of her character. She had been well pleased to observe the childish intimacy between her boy and Frances, and rejoiced that it seemed to strengthen as the years grew. Therefore she was disappointed, and perhaps this prejudiced her somewhat against Ethel. Thus reasoning, the good maternal mind and heart endeavored to show both Havard and Ethel fair play.

Was there no obtrusion of Frances Jones in Havard's mind during this season of bliss? I trow not. There had been, as we have seen, a slightly uncomfortable thought of her; but Havard was fascinated with a present object, and all else was forgotten. It cannot be surmised what he might have thought had he chanced to meet Frances, but the commotion of the British occupation, and the unexpected rencontre with Ethel, sufficed for the time at least to banish Frances altogether from his mind. Perhaps he would have to pay up for it sometime, but for the ethereal present all else was sacrificed to his adoration of Ethel Thomson.


All the time that could be devoted to the entertainment of so cherished a guest was given by Havard. Noticing that her eye was pleased by the

romantic haunts about Mount Joy, he took pains to point out to her the most attractive of them. The walk along the creek seemed to be the favorite. The narrow stream, winding through the graceful gap, had an especial charm for her. There were spots where she paused to catch the effect of the sunshine upon the sides of the chasm, and others where the curving hills seemed to tower in wild beauty.

The ruins of the forge and the mill were a blur upon the fair scene. The forge had lent a certain picturesqueness to the gorge, for its sooty frame comported with the dark stone that so plentifully covered both hills, and the mill did not offend the eye because of its general quaintness. But now the blackened débris about the roofless walls testified of desolation.

Down by the stone dwelling of the Potts family they strolled; sometimes they crossed the creek and ascended the long slope that led westward. There were bypaths veering off to the south up the North Valley Hill, where channels were cut in the sandstone by the flow of crystal springs gushing out from the hillside. There were also viewpoints where the distant hills could be seen, with the blue haze perpetually hanging upon them and a low range of mountains crossing the Schuylkill far above.

There was a pleasing walk by the river, and little dells opening upon it. Up the stream was the mouth of the Perkiomen, where afterward Audubon lived and sketched; and here birds collected in great



numbers, and made the shady haunts in the thick groves vocal with their melody.

Before the week was ended Havard was dismayed one afternoon to hear the clatter of hoofs in the roadway. His sense did not deceive him—it was a body of dragoons. An officer dismounted and approached the house. Havard met him, and civilly invited him into the parlor.

“I am Captain John André,” said the officer, whose suavity made an agreeable impression. “I am on the hunt of some property I have lost, and will be indebted to you for any information you can give.”

Havard suspected what was coming, but he calmly inquired, “What sort of property was it, sir; and how have you lost it?”

“A horse which I had recently obtained broke away from me, and carried with him a saddle and bags, the latter containing a roll of guineas.”

“Have you visited the place where you purchased the animal?”

The officer’s manner was now uneasy. “The fact is,” said he, “the animal was confiscated as belonging to a person in rebellion against his majesty. I appropriated him to my own use, as suited to my purpose. I understood that he had been taken in this vicinity—that is, within two or three miles of this place, and supposed that he might have escaped to his home.”

Havard looked hard at the captain without responding. Probably the officer divined his thoughts, for he said: “Of course, if the animal has

been taken unjustly I will restore him, if I find him; although I would prefer to have him for my own use. But I expressly want some papers that are in the saddlebags, and also the money contained in them."

"Sir," said Havard, "we have suffered much in this quarter from the doings of your soldiers. Our stock has been taken away, our valuables seized, and our grain and hay have been confiscated."

Captain André interrupted him: "I regret to hear such an account as this, and trust that your statement is a little stronger than the circumstances warrant. It was not the intention of Sir William Howe to confiscate the property of any but avowed rebels against the Crown. If any wrongs have been perpetrated I promise you that they shall be righted upon application to him."

Havard inquired, "Shall I have redress for the stock taken from my farm?"

"Certainly; if you have not been in arms against the king, General Howe will pay your claim for any depredations upon the part of foragers. He is extremely careful about such matters."

"Well," said Havard, "upon the assurance of such redress I will give you information concerning your property. My own horse was taken from the stable by some of your men, and next day he returned with a strange saddle and bridle, and a pair of saddlebags containing the articles you speak of. I will take pleasure in returning what belongs to you."

So saying Havard went to the attic and procured the saddle, which he laid upon the floor, and then

requested the captain to examine the contents. The latter hastily glanced at the papers, and, opening the roll of coin, discovered that all was right.

"I thank you exceedingly," he said to Havard, "and shall be your debtor in any way you require."

But Havard responded, "I wish no other recognition than that you first mentioned—the restoration of what was taken from me by the soldiers, or compensation for it."

The captain opened a little blank book and inquired the value of the abstractions, which Havard gave with scrupulous care, so as not to exceed the proper amount. André noticed this, and, affixing the same sums, he cast up the entire amount, more than two hundred pounds, asked if it were satisfactory to Mr. Brown, and then, drawing up an order upon the paymaster, he handed it to him, and was about to pass away, when he suddenly turned on his heel and said: "Mr. Brown, are you sure that an offer for your horse would be unavailing? I should greatly like to possess the animal."

But Havard shook his head. He could not part with Saladin, especially in view of his latest service.

With a polite bow the young officer left the premises, and rejoined his body of horse. Soon he was speeding away toward the social attractions of the Quaker City.

It was a godsend to Havard, and through him to other sufferers; for he took care to tell the neighborhood of Howe's willingness to meet all claims for trespass, except of course, in the cases of those



in open rebellion. And yet the ruin wrought in Tredyffrin township was so great that the combined claims of its citizens for reimbursement by the Congress amounted to a round ten thousand pounds!

On Saturday Havard had occasion to run up to a neighbor's, residing on the road to Gordon's Ford. As usual Saladin accompanied his master, who patted his treasure endearingly, in self-gratulation at the remarkable restoration of his lost favorite. Up the rise to the west of Valley Creek they climbed, and then descended again toward Jug Hollow, where Saladin was accustomed to plunge his nostrils in a fine stream flowing from the North Valley Hill. While the horse drank, his rider scanned the mountain side—for such it seemed to him who had never gazed upon greater elevations. He was now on the north side of the Hill, having emerged from the gap at the ford over Valley Creek; and even the extraordinary adventures of the last week could not make him oblivious to the beauty of the deep concave curve of Mount Misery.

He recalled the pleasurable emotion of his recent climb with Ethel to the sandstone spring far up on the heights, and the beautiful view of the Never-sinks near the town of Reading. He was disposed to dream during these days, and he regretted his inability to remember in which of the "Fortunate Islands" he was luxuriating, when the more practical Saladin, who could drink no more of his favorite brook, pricked up his ears and snorted a challenge to an approaching cavalcade. His mas-

ter's return voyage to the land of the real was exceedingly expeditious, and not unaccompanied with dismay, since he supposed that he should have to encounter some lingering redcoat troop. But what was his astonishment to discover a motley crowd of farmers and laborers, armed with weapons of all sorts, some of them approved instruments of warfare, and others as unmilitary as the scythe, or pitchfork.

The surprise appeared to be mutual, nor did the improvised soldiery exhibit an over-readiness to announce their mission. Havard saw that the more substantial men of the neighborhood were sparsely represented, and divined that some mischief was brewing. The self-nominated leader of the party, a man who had only within a year or two come up from the southern border, accosted Havard with an air of familiarity:

"I say, Brown, ye'll want to turn in and have a whack at this job, now, won't ye?"

Where had Havard heard that voice before? It seemed to him but a little while since it had sounded in his ears. While he was endeavoring to recall the circumstance the fellow spoke again:

"Ye're right in with us, I reckon, Brown. The Britishers haint let you go scot free, I'll be bound, 'en ye kin settle up the score with a bit o' interest to boot."

Havard was inclined to be reserved in manner with the rude partisan, whose free style of address was all the more obnoxious because it was evident that the speaker had been wetting his whistle with

potations much stronger than those of the sandstone spring. But he responded:

"I do not know what business calls you out to-day, so I cannot tell what interest I may have in it."

"Dang it, Brown, have ye forgotten th' old man in his 'ristycrat gig t'other day, up 't Peggy's?"

Havard saw it all now, he thought. Yes, he recollected how when Judge Moore stopped to converse with him at Peggy's corner this loud fellow declared the Tory ought to be mobbed. He could guess the motive for the movement then in progress.

"I suppose you allude to Judge Moore."

"The very same old codger, dang his old beard. We're going to wipe him up, sure 's persimmons. We haint got no room f'r that kind o' varmint in this yer kentry. Will ye jine the band?"

Havard was in a predicament. The very fact that such a fellow was at the head of the enterprise was proof that his followers were of no better material, and would probably not submit to reason. Yet he thought it unwise to say, "No," for he might yet prove of some use to his old friend. While he hesitated to reply, he was informed that the movement began at Peggy's after the party had been well plied with beer and ardent spirits. Perhaps, because Peggy was aware that certain sinister transactions had linked her name with that of Will Tryon in the gossip of the neighborhood, she felt it policy to urge on the tipsy patriots to punish a British sympathizer. Her voice and that of Nancy Mawhort had been loudly exerted in this direction; and, whether Tory or Whig prevailed, the till of the

"inn" would be all the richer, she cunningly reasoned.

A closer scanning of the company showed Havard that it must have been reinforced materially after starting from Peggy's; for some of his comparatively near neighbors were numbered with it, among them men who were of much better grade than the habitual bibulous loungers under the catalpas on the Lancaster road. It occurred to him that it were well to cultivate these latter; and so, with a remark that included no committal to the purposes of the Vigilantes, he brought up their rear.

At least two miles of roadway were yet to be traversed before Moore Hall would greet the eyes of the noisy civilians; and while riding over the comparatively level ground after ascending the first hill—whose red soil was dry and dusty—Havard felt his way in argument with the better people of the party. Unfortunately, these were rankling with the recollection of their losses at the hands of Howe's foragers, and were in no mood to be merciful. Yet Havard made a helpful point now and then, and in the main strengthened his cause. He was encouraged to believe that with more time at his disposal he would be able to defeat any vengeful steps. However, the crowd having received some more accessions among the Judge's own neighbors, it was not long ere it came in sight of the sought-for mansion on the other side of Pickering Creek; and when it was pointed out to the ignorant leader he called a halt and exclaimed:

"Yon's the foul nest of the old British hawk;

now, boys, ye know yer duty. Le's make the old man sweat!"

Moore Hall stood on the right bank of the Schuylkill, and commanded a pleasing view of a great curve of that ever-winding stream, and of the North Valley Hill. It was an ambitious residence for that day; and its handsome exterior was supplemented with many interior comforts that had been transported across the Atlantic.

It was the Judge himself who opened the door when the Falstaffian band made its appearance upon his lawn. He had seen it approach, and surmised trouble.

"Well, gentlemen," he said, with a fine sneer, "you have done me the honor to call upon me, I perceive. May I ask you to receive the hospitalities of my home?"

The crowd were taken aback by this unlooked-for salute. Unaccustomed to close contact with men of the Judge's rank, and above all feeling uncomfortable upon such novel business, they might have retired abashed, but that their rough leader held them to the issue. Coarsely the borderer opened his mission, and, the blaze once started, the fire burned hotly enough. The Judge, who was furious at the insult and outrage, threw no water upon it; but excoriated the band, holding it up to contempt, and declaring his loyalty to the king. But when it developed that by some he was being held to account for complicity in the Paoli Massacre, he indignantly turned upon his tormentors with emphatic denials and maledictions.

O, but it was a brave sight to see the venerable man confronting his enemies! His appearance was leonine, and truly he was a lion at bay. Well on his way to fourscore, his eyes were undimmed, and now they fairly blazed with wrath. His long beard was patriarchal and twinges of pain made his face more haggard than usual.

Havard pressed his way through the throng, and approached the Judge, who seemed amazed to recognize him in such company. "*You* here, Havard!" he exclaimed. "Is it possible that you have joined in this insult?"

"I'm only here, Judge Moore, to protest against this act, and to do what I can to prevent so great a wrong."

The Judge extended his hand. Your pardon, my boy," he said; "I spoke too hastily. I might have known that none of your blood would consent to such dastardly doings. I thank you, my dear fellow. Forgive my quick words."

"I need not tell you, Judge Moore, that my sympathies are with the Colonies, as yours are with the king. These men know it also; and I beg them to give up their unholy purpose to harm you or your possessions, and return to their homes. Certainly they will only regret the wrong after it is done."

Two or three of the cooler heads stood at Havard's side, but they were called "milksons" by the remainder of the band, and as the great majority were bent upon pillage their counsel was of no avail.

It was agreed that no harm should be done to the Judge's person, but that his possessions should be

overhauled and certain confiscations made. A dramatic incident occurred, when a sword of rare workmanship and highly ornamented handle was discovered by one of the ransackers. The Judge snatched the weapon from the hand of its finder, and, bending to the floor in a spasm of pain, stepped upon the beautiful blade and snapped it at the handle. Flinging the blade upon the floor he thrust the handle in his pocket, and told the rabble that they might possess the weapon if it signified disloyalty, but they should not practice thievery.

Proud, uncompromising character that the Judge seemed, a humble heart beat in his bosom; and several generations have gratified his pious wish by treading upon the slab that covers his remains, while passing in and out of the door of Old Saint David's at Radnor.

The crowd finally dispersed, Havard lingering to the last to put a brake upon the wheels of pillage, and carrying to his home the blessing of the old man, who was brave enough to assert his conscientious convictions regardless of personal cost.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE DILEMMAS OF DIPLOMACY

ETHEL'S return to Philadelphia was arranged for the following Tuesday, and Havard rejoiced that Sunday would still be spent in her company. That they would attend divine service somewhere seemed to be assumed; but the place was not selected until the morning of the holy day.

Havard thought that it would be peculiarly pleasant to visit Saint Peter's; but a specter arose in the path whose influence was almost as potent as that of the angel that appeared to Balaam's patient and humble steed. He thought for the first time during these days of unalloyed sweetness of Frances Jones; and the disquieting interrogatory crept in, "Shall I meet her, if we go to Saint Peter's?" There was even a slight but unmistakable tingling about his ears as he reverted to their happy friendship, and his sudden indifference to it. But he argued, "My duty to Ethel is a higher duty, because I love her more than any other person."

It was not particular to Ethel whether she went to Saint Peter's or to some other house of worship. Perhaps she would have remained in the farmhouse just as willingly. Candidly, there was little to amuse her in this plain country life, and she craved



the excitement of the city. The edge of rural pleasures had been almost worn away; and the British occupation of Philadelphia promised much in the way of novelty. Occasionally she had a serious thought regarding a possible residence in this lonely spot with its humdrum life and duties, and she half rebelled against a union involving such a strain upon her predilections.

Havard managed the affair very ingeniously, contriving to create some curiosity in Ethel's mind relative to the Valley Friends' Meeting; and thither they went, a horse being borrowed from Cousin Samuel Havard.

Out into the bright sunshine and crisp air rode the light-hearted pair. Mount Joy never seemed more engaging; it was a superb sweep from southeast to south. On the Church road there was a swell, from which, looking back, the foot of the great hill was seen largely enhanced in beauty. At the forks, they turned down the Swedes' Ford road and traversed the gently rolling floor until they reached the turn to the meeting-house.

Ethel would fain have wandered among the graves, but their uniformity, and the absence of quaint inscriptions, disappointed her. After but little delay—especially as it was near the time for the opening of the meeting—they entered the primitive place of worship.

Havard, who had explained to Ethel the division of the meeting-house into two parts, escorted her to the door used by the women, when she followed some of her sex who were passing in, and found a

seat midway of the room. Havard's bench was nearer the door.

It wanted but a short while of the hour fixed for the meeting, and very soon there rested upon the company that perfect quiet characteristic of Friends' gatherings. The ministers and the officers, male and female, sat upon high seats facing their brethren, and a serious expression pervaded their faces.

The eyes that were bent upon the floor were apparently oblivious of terrestrial scenes. The faces of the women, half hid by their plain bonnets, wore a saintly aspect; and an air of gravity sat upon the broad-brimmed, venerable countenances of the men preachers as they engaged in silent meditation and prayer.

It was perhaps a quarter of an hour before the quiet was broken. Then Havard noticed the meeting rising, whereupon he, too, stood up. He observed that a minister was moved to offer supplication, which he did upon his knees. It was a brief, humble petition for light and power. Soon the congregation rose again. This time a woman was kneeling. In a voice of singular sweetness she besought the divine blessing. Havard was thrilled, and wondered if many people lived so close to God as this choice spirit. He noticed that she quoted passages from the Bible with unusual pathos and power. The burden of her supplication was "that the illumination of the Spirit might be given to all who were out of the ark of safety, that they might accept the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

The voice hushed—it seemed as though an angel had vanished—and the people resumed their seats. The benches were stiff and plain, in keeping with the entire apartment; but the house was faultlessly clean. Havard kept comparing this simplicity with the elaborate externals of the Church service, and came to the conclusion that each alike seemed to influence the heart divinely. Presently a venerable form arose, pronounced a passage of Scripture, and presented a message brimming with simplicity, plainness, and spirituality. It was quite brief, but pointed and apposite.

Havard had rarely given such undivided attention to a sermon. Perhaps its brevity held him, or its exceeding plainness interested him; perhaps the touching of his heart chords by the finger of Cupid had put him in tune for all good things. He began to survey the meeting. He wondered if all Friends walked in such an exalted spirituality. His eye scanned those in front of him whom he was able to recognize, until he had mentally enumerated and classified them. Then it wandered to the other side of the house, and he thought of this and that one whose sweet ways and words made religion very attractive to those who knew them. Soon his gaze rested on Ethel. How different she looked from these plain people! What a thing of beauty she was compared with them! And yet he was not quite sure in his honest heart that her customary toilet did not compare somewhat unfavorably with their simple garb.

But O! ah! there! who was that other worshiper—

not clad like the Friends—on the farther side? There was something familiar about the hat and light shawl—yes, it must be—Frances Jones! Havard's spiritual meditations were unexpectedly interrupted. He had suddenly come down from his paradise, having heard words that it was not lawful for him to utter.

The remainder of the exercises was lost upon him. He would have been glad if they had lasted longer, so that he could have collected his wits. But by-and-by the old men on the front seats reached out their hands for a fraternal clasping, and as if by instinct the meeting arose and did similarly.

The quiet was ended, men and women became secular again, smiling, chatting about the health of the various families, inviting each other to visit, talking about the weather and those other trite topics that human nature will never cease to confer about till time shall be no more.

Havard would have given much to escape from the embarrassment of a certain meeting. An Aladdin's lamp to touch, and therewith summon immediate transportation to the shades of Mount Joy, would have gratified him immensely. But the ordeal must be met.

But it came about naturally enough. Ethel made her exit slowly, not lingering, because she was unacquainted with the worshipers. At the door Havard introduced to her various Friends of the women's side; and while they were talking Frances came out with a cousin, who wore the customary plain clothes of the Society. For the first time she recognized

the presence of Havard, greeted him unaffectedly, and introduced him to her cousin. Then she became aware of Ethel's presence, and Havard begged to make his friends acquainted. It was really an awkward moment, for Havard was ill at ease, Ethel scarcely aroused into conversation, the cousin a little shy, and Frances slightly perplexed. But the latter rallied at once, and, perceiving that she was the natural hostess of the occasion, made it very pleasant for Ethel and greatly gratified Havard.

It was Havard who brought the horses for Frances and her cousin, and they rode away together. Frances invited Ethel and Havard to dinner at her mother's, but this was heaping coals of fire on Havard's head, although the amiable girl did not dream it. The invitation was gratefully acknowledged, but not accepted; and at the proper turn Ethel and Havard bent their way northward, while Frances and her guest kept on for the little distance that still separated them from the Jones homestead. At the parting, however, Frances obtained the promise of an afternoon call.

Although Mrs. Brown had been unwilling to go to meeting with her son and their guest, she appeared quite ready to accompany them to Mrs. Jones's.

Ethel thought she had never received a more cordial greeting than that which Frances extended upon their arrival, and which was as heartily seconded by her mother. Mr. Jones, in a farmer's Sunday best, did the honors of a host, and Lydia Darrach, Frances's cousin, contributed to the sociability of the occasion.

The latter, like Ethel, had been detained in the vicinity because of the military occupation and derangements of travel. The afternoon proved too brief to permit a thorough discussion of the war excitement, and the narration of the various incidents that had come under the notice of each participant.

Mrs. Jones and her daughter were prompt to award General Howe a meed of praise for the admirable conduct of his troops so far as personal behavior was concerned, albeit their loss by confiscation and waste approached two hundred pounds.

Mr. Jones, supposing that Havard would be interested in the science of war, invited him to survey the lines occupied by the British during their brief stay. Together they traversed the fields, and inspected the points chosen for the posting of the batteries, and the location of the different battalions, the body-guard, and other divisions of the army.

They crossed the meadow with its murmuring brook, and ascended the South Valley Hill, where the upper post had been maintained. Immediately behind it was the short road to Squire Henny Bell's and to Peggy's corner, used by the Joneses. It struck up into the woods, soon bore to the right for a few rods, and then, turning again to the left, joined the Lancaster road an eighth of a mile, or less, east of Peggy's.

When the men returned to the house they found the ladies engrossed in conversation, in which all appeared fairly at home. Havard was not much disposed to talk, but enjoyed the opportunity of listen-

ing to the laughing disputes and merry arguments of the fair ones.

Now he could not but observe the contrast between Ethel and Frances. It was marked, for Ethel was without question of an unusual type of beauty, while Frances made no pretensions in that respect. Yet Frances was possessed of an attractiveness of feature that was indisputable. In addition, her manner was so gentle, her conversation so intelligent, and her amiableness so evident that many a bright memory was recalled to Havard as he silently looked and listened.

But it must be said that Ethel shone brilliantly both in beauty and in intellect that afternoon. She could not know that Havard had ever entertained any feeling other than that of a simple friendship for Frances; and yet, as though some little bird had whispered to her that it lay deeper, she took upon herself a degree of power that made her seem fairly dazzling in Havard's eyes.

And what of Frances? Did the little bird tell her, too, of a change that had come over her playmate of childhood? Ah, she did not need the ministry of the feathered songster! Skillful is the man who can hide from the penetrating gaze of a woman the fact that he is in love.

For Frances knew Havard better than he knew himself. She could read his thoughts in the olden days, the bashful tokens of love that never got into words but shone from his eyes and hung on his deeds; and in more mature years she recognized the riper symptoms. In ignorance of the progress of

events she plainly perceived that Havard had deserted her. This beautiful girl from the city had bewitched him and taken him captive—perhaps innocently enough.

There was a tumult in her soul while she maintained a perfect outward calm in attendance upon these lovers. She never had loved Havard more than at this moment when he seemed to be far away.

How rarely we recognize the heartaches that lie concealed under sunny smiles. The afternoon was especially pleasant to Havard. "Why," said he to himself, "Frances seems to enjoy it; I guess she never had any serious thoughts of me, after all." What would he have said had he known the truth? Still, his conscience was not perfectly clear.

The men conversed of Tryon, who had been seen very little since the coming of Howe. He appeared to avoid his neighbors, with the exception of two or three who agreed with him in Tory sentiment; but there existed a general opinion that he had given aid and comfort to the enemy, and he was darkly considered by some as a full-fledged spy upon patriots.

After a while Mr. Jones said slowly, "Do you know what Balsam Ringer says about Will?"

Havard responded, "No; what is it?"

"It is a dreadful impeachment, if true. It seems that on the night of the massacre Bill Wersler had trouble with a horse; it had the colic, and Bill was up the most of the night with it. I think the beast got into the cornfield and ate a good bit of



grain off the stalk. You know it was a pretty stormy, darkish night, and nothing much could be seen, but at midnight Bill heard some awful far-away screams. About four o'clock he went out for a drink of water, and while he was drinking—everything being quiet—he thought he heard a moaning and groaning near the gate, and somebody say, 'Help!' There he found a man down on the ground, weak's a cat, and complaining that he was in great pain. Bill helped him in the gate, and was going to get him in the house or the barn, but the man begged him not to move him. He wanted water, which Bill ran and got for him; and then he told Bill that he was stuck with a bayonet back of the 'Paoli.' "

Havard listened with breathless interest. Seeing that Mr. Jones hesitated, he inquired, "But what had Tryon to do with it?"

"That's the strange part of it. He told Bill that he was on picket down near the hollow as you go up from the 'Warren'; and that Will Tyron was sneaking round with cider that night, and got the password from one of the boys; and that he came with the soldiers when he was run through with the steel."

"But how could he know Will Tryon?" asked Havard in amazement.

"O, I forgot to tell you that Bill went and got his candle, and looked him in the face, and saw that he was a fellow who used to work over on Nutt's road, and afterward enlisted in Wayne's brigade. He had worked a spell or two over this way, and

got acquainted with Bill and some other fellows. It seems he knew Will Tryon pretty well."

"Why, this is indeed horrible," said Havard, "but then the man may have been mistaken. You know it was very dark, especially in the hollow. I don't see how he could tell about its being Will."

"Yes, it was dark enough, but then the chap said that Tryon talked to him, and he knew his voice, and Tryon knew he knew him. He stuck to it that Will got some of Peggy's cider off on the boys, and that afterward he came along with the soldiers and showed them the way. The poor fellow was badly cut up. He could hardly talk, but called for water the whole time—couldn't get enough."

"What became of the picket—did the redcoats get him?"

"No, he died in two or three hours. Nothing could be done for him. How he dragged himself away to Bill's I don't see. But I guess he was afraid they would kill him over there; and anyhow he didn't want to be taken prisoner. Bill would have gone over to Stephens's—down the road from the Forge—but he saw that it wasn't of any use. So he just made him as easy as possible, and cared for him till the end. The poor fellow said he had enlisted for his country's sake, and he guessed that he could as well give up his life as anybody, seeing he had no family; but he didn't like losing it in that mean fashion—what he called 'a scurvy trick of one's own neighbors.'"

For a moment Havard was lost in thought. Then he inquired, "Didn't the picket have any friends?"

"None in this part of the country. He came from down east a few years ago, and worked around wherever he got a job. Bill tried to find some one that was related to him, but it was no use; and so in two or three days he buried him out in the field under a walnut tree. There wasn't anything on him, in his ragged pockets, except a knife and two or three little trinkets that Bill saved if anybody should want them."

Havard shuddered at the narrative. It admitted of little doubt, evidently, that Tryon had perpetrated the blackest treachery. He could understand how a man might favor the king's side of the controversy, and yet abide the issue, without turning against his neighbors in acts of savagery.

Mr. Jones continued: "When morning broke Bill Wersler saw a big pool of blood where the man lay by the gate, and all along back you could track him by the same sign. He must have just dragged himself along across by Saint Peter's. Perhaps that's why the British missed him. He got far enough away while they were up the hill, and then they did not travel his way when they got back again.

But Tryon was the uppermost thought in the minds of both of them. They looked at each other, as though each read the other's innermost meditations, and still they forbore remark. Both were just men, anxious to be careful and exact in their estimate and criticisms of their fellow-men. Perhaps the result was most significantly expressed in a deep-drawn sigh on the part of Havard, and a rubbing of the brow by his host.

Socially it was a very pleasant visit. The tea—a very precious article—was of Mrs. Jones's best brewing. Mrs. Brown and Ethel bestowed high praise upon the simple, tempting repast that mother and daughter were able to conjure from sources not exhausted by foreign exactions, as they smilingly remarked.

In the yet early evening, before the gloaming deepened in the glen where Valley Creek girded itself for the passage of the ravine, the Browns and Miss Thomson returned to the house on the Mount Joy slope.

Havard was grateful to Frances for the rare unselfishness of her hospitality, but he little recked of the cost to her. That night, while Lydia Dar-rach slept peacefully by her side, dreaming of the little city on the Delaware, Frances watched the stars through the panes of her small window; and their slow movement seemed sympathetic with the dragging pain at her heart, her face, meanwhile, being wet with tears.

## CHAPTER XII

### CROSSING THE RUBICON

TUESDAY was the last of the September calendar, and a suggestion of October characterized the cool air of the early morning. Mrs. Brown was stirring at least an hour earlier than common, that Ethel might be provided with breakfast in season for a propitious start. Havard, too, was busy, getting ready for the journey, and was both sorry and glad; for, while he regretted to lose so precious a prize, he expected to enjoy a certain privacy of association for several hours. He was self-reproachful at not having proffered his escort to Lydia Darach in an invitation to return to the city in the company of Ethel—nowadays he was catching himself in the performance of many minor delinquencies—but it would have been too great a concession, especially as he would not be likely to see Ethel for some time to come.

To that young lady the farewell was not burdensome. Accustomed as she was to the gayer life of the town, the crickets and the katy-dids constituted but indifferent society, when Havard and his mother were out of sight. The pastoral scenery became monotonous, and a general air of lonesomeness enveloped the house and the glen below, with its glancing waters.

She found herself revolving more frequently the

serious feature of her engagement to Havard. She was sure that the manly fellow was well worth having. He was certainly of better fiber than the majority of the young men she knew; and there could be no doubt of his affection for her. His devotion struck her as something remarkable. And yet there were times when she wondered if she truly reciprocated so ardent a love. The relationship was so rapid in its development that she could scarcely believe in its reality; it was so unconventional to her mind.

All was ready. Mrs. Brown bade Ethel farewell, with a warm invitation to return soon. She presented the girl with a luncheon to be eaten as the morning wore on, and threw over her shoulders a light shawl to protect her from the moisture and coolness that hung about the glen. Havard assisted his sweetheart to her seat upon the horse borrowed for the occasion, and, lightly mounting Saladin, waved farewell to his mother.

They rode up the easy grade to the Gulph road, when they turned southeasterly. Havard called Ethel's attention to the peculiar setting of the hills, and remarked that they would present a formidable defense against a hostile army.

Some distance beyond they noticed a puff of smoke, followed immediately by the crack of a gun which startled the horses. Riding nearer, they saw a young man of about eighteen picking up a rabbit that he had struck. Havard recognized him as Dewalt Beaver, and introduced him to Ethel as a neighbor and friend, and took occasion to praise

his skill with the weapon. Dewalt, rather shy in the presence of so fine a lady, modestly told of his exploits with his favorite weapon, and Havard remarked that it would be dangerous for a man to get within range of it.

The "King" greeted them with his usual cavalier air, as they rode by; and then they slowly cantered onward to the gates of the Gulph and its picturesque hills. At least to Havard the transit of the defile from the "Bird in Hand" to the deep basin on the east was exhilarating. Far up on the right the tall hill stood gray and dark with its masses of rock topped with symmetrical trees, and on the left various rocky folds, with cross ravines, assembled to please the eye, while the murmurous music of the Gulph Creek fell agreeably upon the ear.

Ethel warmed into expressions of pleasure as there came into view a large overhanging rock on the left, where Havard said they might find shelter from rain. A more politic lover would have pronounced it a trysting bower, and proceeded to exhibit the proof of his pudding in the eating, but Havard had not yet gained complete victory over his bashfulness.

Their road led to the Middle Ferry, which was carefully picketed by the new occupants of the Quaker City. The floating bridge, built by General Israel Putnam the previous year, had been carried away, and concealed, after the battle of the Brandywine. The British engineers were already preparing a convenient passageway, but for the present the more ancient ferry was in requisition. A scow was

found, fastened to a post on the western shore, and the horses of Havard and Ethel were led into it. The animals were suspicious of its security, and trod its planks with apprehensive caution. Havard's quick eye observed the progress of some military movement of magnitude. It transpired that the British had in view an attempt to reduce Forts Mercer and Mifflin.

The scow was slowly hauled across the stream by a rope, and its passengers landed, to undergo the inspection of the guard. This safely passed, they again mounted their horses and turned their faces toward the city, which was bounded by Callowhill Street on the north, Christian Street on the south, and at its widest extended between Arch and Walnut Streets, from the Delaware River to Ninth Street.

All the ferries were guarded by an ample force, although the main body of the British lay at Germantown. Havard sighed as he contemplated this foreign possession, and found himself wondering why Howe had been permitted to blind the eyes of the Continentals.

Ethel's parents resided on South Second Street, not far from the Loxley house, then the home of William and Lydia Darrach. In passing this residence of quaint construction Havard remarked to Ethel that there were signs about it of military occupation, and that Lydia might find an unpleasant surprise on her return.

The afternoon was fairly advanced when the leisurely travelers reached their destination. The



welcome they received was unaccompanied by any expressions indicative of previous uneasiness, for no tidings of the spoliation about the Swedes' Ford had come to the attention of Ethel's family. Mr. Brown was not a total stranger in the home, and was bidden to be at ease. Mrs. Thomson refreshed the travelers with a luncheon, of which they were not loth to partake.

Ethel's narrative caused considerable surprise and concern, and the details were anxiously insisted upon. In return, her mother told of the consternation of the people when Howe's advance marched down Second Street after its entry of the city, and of their anxiety when the American ships attacked the batteries. A number of the most inviting dwellings had been already impressed as quarters for the officers, and everybody was looking forward to a long season of British military domination.

Apart from chagrin at the triumph of its strategy, the presence of the army was not devoid of interest on account of its novelty. Soldiers were perpetually seen in the streets, and officers were busily riding to and fro; for a task of some magnitude confronted the army in making its preparations for the winter, and also in laying siege to the stubborn forts in the Delaware; since, without the free navigation of the river, and the receipt of supplies, which must come up from the capes in the men-of-war and transports, the victory would be but partial.

Havard sought the army paymaster, and had Captain André's order cashed; after which he spent an hour or two in rambling about the town and

observing the artillery park in the State House square. The Walnut Street prison attracted his attention—it had been built only two or three years previously, and the promenade ground possessed a morbid interest, for it had been turned into a Potter's Field, and hundreds of Washington's soldiers who had died of smallpox or other diseases were interred there.

The early evening brought Mr. Thomson home from his tallow chandlery, and supper was partaken of with vivacity in conversation and a full discussion of politics. Havard was to remain under Mr. Thomson's roof for the night, and return the following afternoon.

It happened that the prearranged engagements of Mr. and Mrs. Thomson left Ethel and Havard wholly to themselves for the remainder of the evening, and now the lover pleaded his suit with fervor. He was unable to perceive any tangible grounds for delaying a union he thought so desirable, and urged that an early day might be selected for the wedding, but Ethel was disposed to dally.

The hours flew by all too rapidly, the good-nights were spoken, and Havard Brown slept in the city of Penn garrisoned with an armed foe. Dreams of future bliss crowned his slumbers, and a smile illumined his face.

What had occurred to sway Ethel's judgment was not made manifest, but during the morning's interview Havard had with her she so far relented as to accede to his importunity to permit an early day to be chosen for their nuptials. Sanguine as he had

been, the young man had hardly expected such good news so soon, and accordingly he was in raptures. When the early noonday "piece" was eaten, and Saladin was brought to the door, Havard strategically availed himself of the momentary absence of Mrs. Thomson to appropriate a token of affection, which brought blushes to Ethel's cheeks, and nearly exposed the circumstance to her mother's eye upon her return. The tall farmer was a little awkward in his caresses, but his ardor was unmistakable.

With mutual understandings as to a future meeting, Havard bade his love good-by, and, comfortably astride of Saladin, and leading Ethel's borrowed steed, he rode away toward the Middle Ferry on his homeward journey.

Once over the ferry, Havard stimulated the borrowed horse into a lively pace, Saladin being already eager for the Gulph Hills and the well-kept stable that lay beyond them. The return trip had the flavor of emptiness, for it seemed as though he had left some essential behind. The leading thought he indulged was his agreeable relationship to Ethel. Yet this was dreamlike, lacking the semblance of reality. It was such a new world in which to live that he found it difficult to reduce it to a practical everyday level.

Through all his meditations, however, ran a thread of unpleasant reflection. It was in reference to Frances Jones. Whenever he thought of her he invariably found his view of Ethel beclouded. Yet he could not analyze the peculiar feeling; for, maintaining that no engagement of affection had actually

occurred between them, he cleared himself from reproach, and could not comprehend why he should be thus disquieted. Still, when he conjured up the sweet face of Frances, and her gentleness and charm, he found himself wondering how he came to be oblivious of its spell.

The horses trotted on for several miles without any check from their master, and without his observing the objects along the highway. It was not until they reached the Merion meeting-house that Havard became aware that other hoof-beats were resounding in his rear. Then, glancing backward, he saw Will Tryon.

It was Tryon who spoke first. Havard had come to entertain such an aversion for him that he would have found it difficult to utter the first word of greeting. The dark clouds that hung about the fellow could not be explained away; and the story that Mr. Jones told about the wounded picket bore hard upon him. Wersler was an honorable man, highly respected, and Havard could conceive of no motive for slander upon the part of a dying man. The only alternative was the possibility that the picket was mistaken in the darkness.

"Good afternoon, Brown," said Tryon, as he rode by the side of Havard, "we're having a fine spell of weather for the fall work."

"Good afternoon," stiffly responded Havard, "yes, the weather's favorable to farmers' jobs—but then"—and he glanced at the other's face—"there's something else to count these days beside weather."

There was nothing alarming, or even unpleasantly,

suggestive, in this remark, but Tryon discovered an allusion in it that induced a suffusion of his temples and caused him to lose his equanimity in his next remark. "Ah, well, yes, there are some unpleasantnesses that are due to—ah—to the state of affairs."

Havard perceived his confusion, and increased it by a more direct reference to the times: "It's a great pity that we have to bear this trouble, and that we can't be let alone to enjoy our rights in peace. It's scandalous, the things we've had to suffer in our neighborhood, but then—" turning abruptly and looking at his neighbor full in the face—"I suppose *you* haven't lost very much by these doings."

"No, I can't say that I've lost much, for your politics and mine are a little different, you know. I think it was a very great mistake for the Colonies to set up against the king, and I've only been loyal.

"Well, to my mind there's a difference between being loyal and taking a hand in persecuting one's neighbors. I give every man a right to his own way of thinking—sometimes it's hard to tell which way is right, and I don't blame a man for being true to the king; but when it comes to spotting out one's own neighbors, that he's been brought up with, and getting them into trouble, I think it's more like treason than if he had rebelled against the king."

To the guilty conscience of Tryon the words revealed a volume. "How much does Brown know?" he asked himself. It was patent that he was suspected of collusion with the troops in their late incursion; but how much had Havard discovered, and how?

"It don't follow that because one is loyal he should persecute his neighbors," he said, evasively; and then, evidently connecting the events in his mind, he continued: "There are always agents used by a general to inform him of the state of affairs, and of the feelings of the people. That can't be escaped."

"Agents! *spies*, you mean. No commander of a foreign army could find out the feelings of the people unless some spy among them—some snake in the grass—would inform him." Havard waxed warm, and finally said: "Tryon, there's no use mincing matters about this thing. *You're* the spy that told Howe about your neighbors, and gave him a plan of the country and the location of the farms. How much did Captain André give you for the information?"

Tryon was amazed. Deep in subtleties, he never for a moment imagined that his secrets were known to a single patriotic soul. It was inconceivable how Brown had become possessed of this intelligence. He vouchsafed no reply, but his countenance showed that the bolt had struck home.

"Tryon," resumed Havard, rising higher in feeling, and yet speaking with solemnity, "There are worse sins than robbing people and burning their buildings; there is such a thing as stealing watchwords and guiding an enemy to attack one's own countrymen. That's black treason, and there's no forgiveness for it. I hope you have not been guilty of that."

Tryon was overwhelmed. Fear and rage wrestled

for the mastery in his bosom. If he could he would have torn Havard to pieces. The latter had aptly described him as a serpent, slyly concealing himself, and striking at the favorable moment. What he should answer was difficult to decide; but at last, with a show of anger and virtuous indignation, he exclaimed against "such monstrous injustice."

But Havard was not to be brushed aside so lightly.

"After that dreadful night at the 'Paoli'—" here Tryon visibly trembled—"a poor soldier on picket, stabbed and bleeding, found his way across the valley, and died in an hour or two, but he told before he died who brought cider for the soldiers, found out the watchword, and then brought the redcoats. Do you know who that was, Tryon?"

The miserable man was quaking in an agony of fear. Drops of perspiration stood upon his forehead, and he nervously fingered his bridle rein. His very silence proclaimed his guilt—in fact, he was unable to utter a word.

Havard continued: "I only know about that affair of André's. I have not told anybody about it, and do not expect to. That affair of the 'Paoli' is suspected by other people, but I shall not help it on. I recommend you to settle it with your God. I wish you no harm, and do not want to punish you for what I think is one of the greatest sins a man may commit. Remember it's one thing to fight when the blood is hot, about principles one believes to be right, and another thing to betray in cool blood the friends and neighbors you've been intimate with

from childhood. But, I say, settle it with your God."

Tryon's jaw hung in his distress. Yet he was grateful to Havard for the mercy of his last words; for during this conversation the craven fear had possessed him that retribution would follow the discovery of his evil deeds, and he was a coward. But in the clear and beautiful patriotism of Havard Brown, combined with his freedom from revengefulness, he saw himself as a Judas, for considerable gain had accrued to him as the result of his baseness.

But after a fashion Tryon was relieved; for visions of a summary vengeance upon the part of outraged neighbors in the form of a noose and a barn rafter, or the limb of a tree, had been flitting across his brain. However, there was nothing that he could say in reply—what justification was there? And at the first convenient road to the right he turned off the Gulph road, the very picture of guilt.

Much perturbed, Havard rode on, lost in moral reflection, until Saladin paused at the gate of his own barnyard.



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE BITTER BEFORE THE SWEET

It was not until the following Sunday that Havard opened his heart to his mother. The task was far from being easy, for he felt that she would be disappointed in his confidences, because of her warm affection for Frances Jones. But, with a mother's tenderness, guessing his predicament, she diplomatically opened the way with the query, "How does Ethel like country life?"

Havard hitched about uneasily, blushed, and stammered that he thought she was not enamored of the country, but if she had a real taste of it, and got to understand country ways, she would be likely to enjoy it. Now it seemed to him that his opportunity had come, and in a sort of desperation he said, "Mother, I've asked Ethel to be my wife."

There was a silence so profound that Havard thought he could hear his heart thump. Mrs. Brown made no remark, and it was left for Havard to say, anxiously, "I hope, mother, that you can take her into your heart and receive her as a daughter."

Another silence, that was almost cruel to Havard; but it was only because his mother was touched with the pitiful tone of her boy, and then she said, gravely but kindly, "I hope that I shall not be wanting in a mother's duty to her son and his wife. I deeply wish thee happiness."

But Havard well knew that it was a tension upon his mother, and could not refrain from saying, "Perhaps a city girl is not so welcome to you as one brought up in the country. Perhaps you think Ethel will not be contented in this quiet spot."

"Havard," she responded, "I believe that true hearts are found in the cities as well as in the country, and that there are false ones in our own quiet life. Time only can tell in any case what people will do and be; and some who were bred in the city have been very happy in a purely country home."

She wondered whether she ought to say what was welling up to her lips; but after a moment's hesitation she continued: "Havard, I always supposed that Frances Jones would some day become my daughter. I have long loved her with a mother's affection, and hoped that thee might come to look upon her as a lover would. Indeed, I felt pretty sure that this was thy feeling for her; and if I am not mistaken she has so understood it. It is this that casts a shadow upon the announcement thee has just made."

Havard was experiencing unpleasant sensations; but he had had premonitory twinges of conscience, and could not complain. "Why, mother," he said, "there has been nothing of an engagement between Frances and me. I always liked her, and thought a great deal of her, and always shall, for that matter; but it was never understood that we should be married."

"No, Havard, not in so many words, perhaps; but thee knows Frances has never had any other

company, and thee has always attended her to the parties, and visited her at home. There is such a thing as leading people by our actions, if not by our words, to believe certain things; and I should be surprised if Frances has not long entertained the belief that thee felt toward her as a lover."

Havard realized the force of these remarks, and could have enlightened his mother with the narration of many positive expressions of friendship which would appear rather remarkable unless they were understood as explanatory of a particular affection. But he did not illumine her mind with such details, and before he could frame a reply she proceeded:

"Friendships between young men and young women are not like those which spring up between men or between women. No one should tread carelessly on this ground, for if affection is awakened and afterward ignored the results may be cruel. Of course, I do not know what Frances's feelings are; but, judging from many things, I think she has looked upon thee as her lover, and must feel sadly cut to see thee bestow thy heart upon another."

And now Mrs. Brown experienced a revulsion of sentiment. It had seemed her duty to speak thus, but she pitied her son's embarrassment, and she now purposed to smooth the way for the gratification of his wishes. Perhaps her tone was more conciliatory and affectionate; at all events, he felt grateful for the change.

"Has thee decided yet when thee will be married?"

"No, not exactly; but it will most probably be about New Year's."

He was too shy to ask if that date would be convenient to his mother; but she anticipated his thoughts, and remarked that all things could be made ready to suit the time mentioned. Then they discussed the little and large matters associated with so important an event, and the animation displayed by Havard drove away the unpleasantness attending the introduction of the theme.

A diversion as welcome as it was unexpected now occurred. A long-deferred visit to the Browns was made by Miss Jennie Reese and her chum, Miss Rebecca Neilley. The latter young lady had gone over to Reese's and did not demur when the vivacious Jennie proposed a call upon the Browns. The pair proceeded to the Jones homestead with the view of persuading Frances to accompany them, but found her curiously unwilling. They could not understand her grounds for declining, but, persisting in the trip to Mount Joy, they were obliged to leave her behind.

A month before, Frances would have found it quite to her mind to accede to the request of her friends; for the society of Mrs. Brown was grateful, and familiar intercourse with Havard did not detract from the agreeable features of such a visit. But now it could only result in pain, and she felt that she was unequal to the effort. For that matter, a sense of suffering attended her waking hours almost constantly, for her mind would dwell upon hopes that seemed well-nigh extinguished.

The girls burst in upon Mrs. Brown with a liveli-

ness that was completely antithetical to the somberness associated with the early part of the morning. Neither fair brow was clouded with care, and Jennie especially was sparkling with merriment and youthful spirit. If she entertained for that young farmer, Robert Ringer, more than a passing sentiment, she took care to prevent it from preying upon her fresh and pretty face, and was quite able to allude to the fact of his escort to churches and parties.

All young company circled about Mrs. Brown, probably for the reason that it was always agreeable to her; and her brow cleared and her spirits rose when she saw the light-hearted girls on the porch.

"Why, girls! what a pleasant surprise this morning! Come in at once. How does thee each do, and how are all the folks at home? To think that I have a namesake to-day!"

It was the irrepressible Jennie who first replied: "O, Mrs. Brown, we're so glad to call, and we're going to stay to dinner with you, so get our names in the pot. Mind that you have some of your famous jelly on the table, or we'll not come soon again."

Rebecca looked shocked at this presumptuous speech, but Mrs. Brown responded that she would put before such princesses the very best that was to be had in the land, "which," she said, "you know is nothing to brag of since our cousins from over the water paid us a visit."

"Ah, but," said Jennie, "you ought to have seen what a perfect gentleman General Cornwallis was! I half believe I made Rob Ringer jealous of him,

when I told him how fine he was." Here Jennie giggled, and then laughed outright, until the tears came into her eyes. "But I told Rob he needn't be envious of him, but rather of that handsome young fellow, André. The captain was full of fun, and cutting up and all that; and he actually plagued me for a kiss the last time I saw him, as he was going away from the door. When I told Rob that, he looked green. I know he wanted to find out if I gave the captain the kiss, but I just kept him dangling on the end of the line, and gave him no satisfaction."

The voluble young lady laughed as though there were no more enjoyable sport than worrying a lover. Mrs. Brown shook her head deprecatingly, but there was a twinkle in her eye as she reproved Jennie for trifling with so worthy a young man.

"Now, Jennie, thee is doing very wrong to excite such unpleasant feelings in Robert's head and heart. I know very well that thee would not permit the captain to do such a thing, and I suppose he was only indulging a love of fun, and meant nothing serious."

Miss Neilley turned the tide of the conversation by asking if their hostess had put up many artichokes in the spring, she having noticed the plentiful stalks in the garden corner.

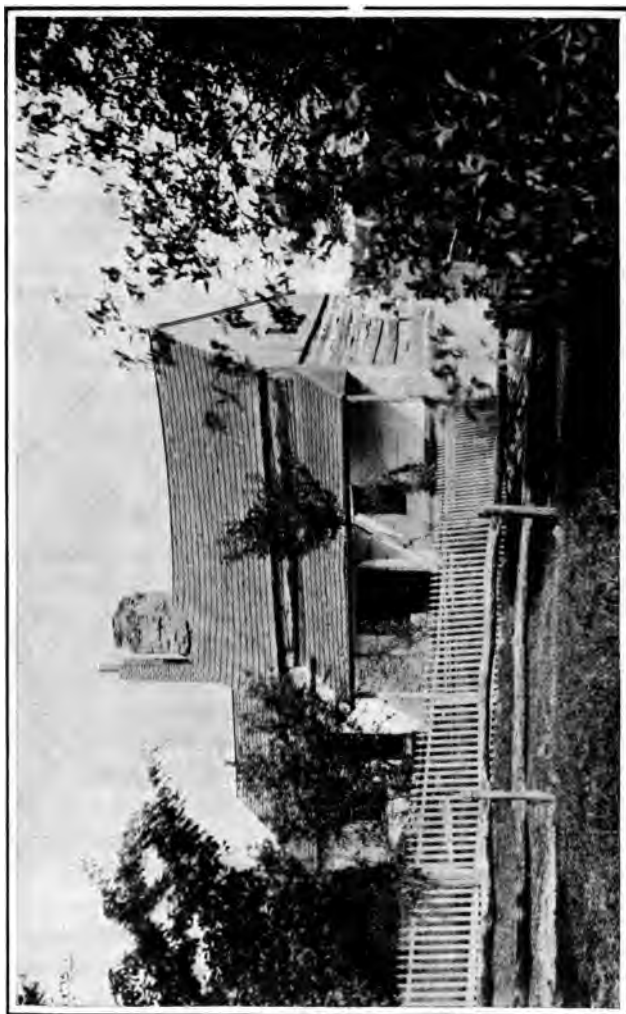
"Yes, and thee shall try some at dinner, and have a jar to take home with thee, if thee likes."

In the happy social life of the times there was a generous interchange of the dainties prepared in country homes, and these crisp tubers, pickled in honest cider vinegar, proved an acceptable relish.

"But where is Havard?" suddenly asked Miss Reese, as she noticed that his face did not appear. "We can't do without him, and I've a notion to carry him away from you, he's such a likely young man. But perhaps he's down in town visiting that handsome Miss Thomson!"

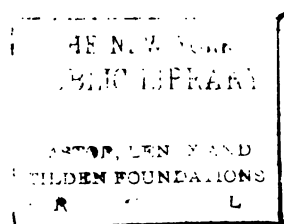
At that moment the door from the kitchen was opened, and in stepped Havard, quite surprised, and pleased withal, to greet his fair neighbors. The badinage went on, however, although under different conditions; but Jennie did not venture to say all that was in her mischievous mind, for Havard was hardly of the same make-up as Robert Ringer, and she was somewhat in awe of him.

The British occupation was still too recent to be ignored in the conversation of the morning. The incidents of interest were almost numberless, from the call of the mounted pickets for water from the springs on the Neilley estate, to the sentinel posted in the cherry-tree top on the Jones farm. The sayings and doings of the officers and the men, the cockney accent of the ordinary British soldiers, and the unintelligible parlance of the Hessians, furnished a collection of interesting matter which has unfortunately nearly all vanished, because of neglect to record it. But then, and for many succeeding years, it served to spice the small talk of the fireside, and warm the hearts of the aged survivors of the Revolution. When their hair was white with the frosts of seven or eight decades, Jennie and Rebecca recited to their grandchildren the stirring incidents of '77.



NEILLEY'S





The garrulous Miss Jennie proved an acquisition to her hostess, for she assumed a full share of the labor of preparing the dinner. She handled the utensils and procured the various viands from their several cellar shelves with as much familiarity as though she had never known any other home. Meanwhile the more demure Miss Rebecca hobnobbed after a fashion with Havard in the sitting room.

The dinner was in marked contrast with the breakfast, so far as mental comfort was concerned, and Havard felt really grateful to the girls for banishing the dismal air that surrounded the first meal of the day.

The artichokes were pronounced delicious—as indeed was the whole of the dinner; and as the girls' appetite had been provoked by their walk, and that of the Browns was effectively stimulated by the general atmosphere of cheer, the noonday spread was so effectually disposed of that Mrs. Brown smilingly said there would be no dishes to wash; but Jennie and her companion assumed the offensive, and hustled the hostess to one side while they "red up."

Presently it was proposed to take a walk in the glen, and the entire company descended to the creek-side, and wandered along the shimmering stream until they entered the ravine. The temptation to scale the steep shoulder of Mount Joy was not resisted. The girls scrambled up the rough corner, assisting themselves by seizing the slight saplings and lesser undergrowth; but occasionally some of

these supports that were not firmly rooted gave way, and then with mingled screams and laughter, and many a contortion of their bodies, they struggled to maintain their footing.

The exercise was good for soul and body, but Mrs. Brown recalled the climbers, when they had attained a point a third of the way to the summit of the sugar loaf, saying that she would be lost if thus left to herself. When the return had been accomplished the party walked along the path leading to the burnt forge with more leisurely steps, the scrambling on the hillside having slightly wearied the ambitious young ladies.

When they came within sight of the ruins even Miss Jennie's spirits were sobered at the contemplation of the baleful imprint of war. Comment upon the transaction was quite free, and much sympathy was expressed for Colonel Dewees. As there was now no particular motive for concealing the incident of the removal of the stores, Havard spoke of the colonel's engagement in that enterprise, and his narrow escape from capture. The narrative of the pursuit of the party, and the firing upon the raft by the dragoons, was absorbingly exciting to the girls.

But their surprise was marked when a rustling in the bushes behind them caused them to turn their heads, for they beheld the identical person of whom they were speaking. He had overheard their remarks, and came forward, smiling. Havard had not seen him, or known of his whereabouts since the moment they had parted, when Havard sallied

down the Schuylkill to scout about the Thomson place.

The ironmaster entertained the company for a half hour with reminiscences of the day so fatal to his business, and of his subsequent adventures.

"While I was trying to keep out of the way of the redcoats," said the colonel, "I felt like finding out all I could; so I hung on their rear guard, and watched them well. You know Wayne expected to fall on their rear when they were moving across the ford, but missed it, and the tables were turned. Well, I was skirting round the Swedes' Ford, when a squadron came along and picked me up. I was pretty well put to; for they could see that I had no work on hand, and seemed to be keeping quite close to their army, and I had to scratch my head to get clear of them. You see, I hadn't been expecting any of them along, for I thought the very last detachment had come in. But, as luck would have it, they were Hessians, and were too thick-headed and too poorly acquainted with our ways to catch me up. Still, I was a good deal afraid, for the lieutenant that led them was the very fellow you dealt with when we sold the *Deutschers sauerkraut*. If he had suspected me of a hand in that it would have been all up with me. They did get some wind of that affair, I think, because of some things I overheard; but I guess they were not thinking of it at that time, for they did not refer to it, but they questioned me sharply enough."

"What did you say, Colonel?" eagerly asked Miss Jennie.

"O, you know all tales pass in war time. I told them a live one, of course. I explained that I lived up the river several miles, and that I had some provisions to sell to General Howe, but that the Continentals were very strict about such things, and that I was trying to find some way of getting my produce into their hands. That got them away from the scent they might have stumbled on, and they let me go, urging me to slip through or around the American lines with my wagon, and they would pay me well."

The girls, recognizing that the day was waning, announced their purpose to go home, whereupon they retraced their footsteps to the house, Havard and the colonel accompanying them as far as the turn in the glen—for Havard requested the iron-master to lend him a portion of his time.

When the girls were out of sight—Mrs. Brown having stopped at her home—Havard opened his mind about the Tryon affair to the colonel, taking care to request secrecy.

The conference lasted fully an hour, and Mrs. Brown had become uneasy, when she saw the missing men returning slowly homeward. The colonel was mournfully impressed with Havard's story, but expressed himself as being far from surprised; for the glimpse of Tryon in the dell on the day of the slaughter at the "Paoli" had awakened his suspicions.

"I will think about the matter, Havard, and we will confer again," was the colonel's last remark, after he had called attention to the lateness of the

hour and the shadows in the ravine; and then he shook hands with his neighbor, and walked rapidly toward the home of his first wife's brother, Isaac Potts—the square stone house by the mouth of the creek.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE ROMANCE OF AN ECHO

THROUGH October the Valley waxed glorious in the gorgeous tints of autumn. Its rim blazed with color, and meadow and grain field vied with each other in exhibiting the delicate hues characteristic of the season's decadence. The knife had been put into the corn, and the shocks of this golden grain reminded straggling old soldiers of the wigwams of the red men in other days. Mellow pumpkins overspread the cornfields, and custards from that savory vegetable were beginning to appear on many a rustic table.

The status of affairs along the Swedes' Ford closely resembled the conditions prior to Brandywine's bloody battle; but small detachments of Continental troops patrolled the entire region to prevent the purveyal of farm products to the luxurious British, who were indolently killing time and care in the chief city of Pennsylvania. These had too many sympathizers, and their cash was too ready, to cause them to go begging for supplies; therefore strict measures were adopted by Washington to cut off as much of this traffic as possible.

The latter had marched from Pottsgrove to the banks of the Skippack, where he kept vigilant watch of his enemy posted at Germantown. Howe was not yet master of his movements, for naviga-

tion of the Delaware was obstructed by the American forts at Mud Island and Red Bank, and *chevaux-de-frise* at Bylling's Point. Howe's brother, the admiral, was in command of the British fleet that lay between Reedy Island and New Castle; and Sir William, in the fraternal desire to assist him in reducing the troublesome redoubts, dispatched part of his forces into New Jersey. Then it was that Washington perceived his opportunity, and at dusk of the third of October left the Metuchen Hills for a long march of fifteen miles over trying roads, to attack his ancient enemy.

At daybreak of the foggy morning that succeeded, Captain Allen McLane, an enterprising Marylander at the head of the patrol, struck the British outposts at Chestnut Hill. Then quickly ensued the rattle of musketry and the roar of artillery; and Wayne, burning with the desire to retrieve his losses at the "Paoli," scattered the enemy's light infantry almost in a moment with an impetuous charge of his brigade, and, when they rallied once and again to resist him, punished them severely with the bayonet.

The steady Sullivan pressed upon the enemy's left wing with such vigor that for a time it seemed as though the entire British line must give way, and had his movement been seconded immediately disaster would doubtless have overtaken the army of Howe; but part of the American force unwisely lingered to dislodge those British who had cast themselves into Mr. Chew's stone mansion on the lower slope of Mount Airy, and the slight delay was sufficient to permit the alarmed British commander



to rally his flanks, and not only to escape from capture, but to drive back his adversaries in confusion. At one time he had conceded that the engagement was lost—that his encampment was surrounded. For five miles the retreat of the Americans was contested vigorously; but General Greene displayed his strategic skill, and Wayne's cannon, planted near the church at White Marsh, furnished unanswerable arguments for a halt upon the part of the British.

It was mortifying that so gallant an engagement, thoroughly victorious at first, and promising an unexampled Continental triumph, should be dissipated by lack of coöperation; but the patriots for miles around who heard the sounds of battle on that dark morning understood; and were overjoyed that Washington had so nearly attained a signal victory.

October communicated battle tidings from down the Delaware, also. Bylling's Point had suffered from the attack of the vessels; but Fort Mercer, at Red Bank, and Fort Mifflin were still standing against the assaults of Howe's men-of-war. These fortifications had been strengthened by troops sent by Washington from his new post at White Marsh, and Colonel Christopher Green at the former and Lieutenant-Colonel Smith at the latter presented a stout front to the imposing naval foe.

Late in the month a land force of Hessians under Colonel Donop assaulted Fort Mercer with spirit, but was defeated, and its brave leader slain. The attack, at the same time, upon Fort Mifflin was resisted by its commander, and by Commodore

Hazelwood of the American galleys; and it was not until the middle of November that Cornwallis, at the head of a much superior force, took the fort at Red Bank; and a powerful armament on shore, aided by a formidable fleet, compelled the evacuation of its fellow on Mud Island. Then, only, had the British ships free range of the Delaware. Once more it was the delay in sending reinforcements, and the necessarily tedious movements of ragged, shoeless men, that lost the day to the patient commander-in-chief.

The surrender of Burgoyne electrified the patriots, for no familiarity with military science was necessary to make them understand its significance. Their hopes beat high that Howe would fall into a similar trap, and expectations were indulged that Washington would crush the redcoats by some brilliant maneuver. Such a movement was contemplated, and in a council of war it was fully discussed. Only a few of the generals, however, among whom was Wayne, favored an attack upon the strongly intrenched regiments of Howe; and the sagacious Washington, at the very time when intrigues against his influence and position were rife, and when he might have won glory by valor, even if misdirected, was steadfastly guided by the promptings of prudence. Formidable indeed was the line of British forts stretching from the Schuylkill to the Delaware, and there is little probability that an attack would have been successful.

The early days of December originated a romance in which at least one family in the valley was par-

ticularly interested. Frances Jones, having occasion to make some purchases of cloth, arranged to spend a week with her cousin Lydia Darrach. She was not aware that her estimable cousin was embarrassed by the presence in her home of the adjutant-general of the British army, else she might have deferred her visit until the convenience of her cousin, and her own inclinations, could have been more distinctly favored. When she reached the house on Second Street, with its curious protruding windows on the sides, and airy porch above, which Whitefield employed as a pulpit, she was startled at meeting the officer, who at once recognized the pleasant-faced girl whom he saw at his general's headquarters in the Chester Valley.

Lydia made her guest welcome. It was a special satisfaction to have her under the peculiar circumstances, although the officer and his callers were thorough gentlemen. The house was large, and able to accommodate a goodly number of visitors, and the circumstance that it was "out of town," being across Second Street bridge, caused it to be selected for various councils of war. So Frances was brought for the second time into approximately close contact with distinguished personages.

Her stay at Lydia's was on the whole very pleasant, the bracing air of the first winter month proving delightful for walks about the town, and explorations of "Bathsheba's Bower," a retreat of springs on her cousin's property.

Among the charms of Penn's city, of which Frances never wearied, was the water front; and

many an hour found her gazing at the broad stream, the Jersey shore beyond it, and the vessels that lay at anchor. It must be confessed, too, that notwithstanding her horror of warfare she found something fascinating in the soldierly bearing of the veterans under Howe's command, and admired their evolutions in the streets or on the parade ground.

Mr. Darrach's pedagogical duties required him to be absent frequently, and Frances was then even more particularly valued by Lydia, who grieved when the time for her guest's departure approached. Frances had chosen Wednesday as the day of her farewell, and despite her cousin's remonstrance insisted upon keeping the time. Lydia consequently prepared a special supper for Tuesday afternoon.

While thus engrossed Lydia begged her cousin to attend the door, her hands being plunged in flour; and this duty was accepted by Frances. The adjutant-general seemed to have an unusual number of callers.

It was scarcely more than six o'clock—but of course quite dark at that season of the year—when Frances was summoned by another visitor. A candle dimly burning shed a faint light in his face, and Frances felt sure that she had seen him before, but she could not identify him. As for the man, he started sensibly at seeing her. He was not in uniform, and did not have a military bearing. His words were very few, and his vocal chords seemed to be strained. He appeared uneasy, and lost no time in seeking the adjutant-general. But Frances kept wondering who the young man could be. One

thing attracted her attention singularly. The beard that he wore was unnatural, and she suspected that it was a disguise. Yet it had sufficient effect to bewilder her concerning the stranger's identity.

While she was battling with the puzzling problem a knock at the kitchen door preceded the appearance of the adjutant-general, who accosted Lydia with the request that she would get a room in readiness to receive a number of guests, about whose departure she should feel no concern, since they would probably stay late.

Lydia, absorbed in baking her biscuit and otherwise preparing for her cousin's enjoyment, was disconcerted by this communication, which, of course, amounted to a command; but Frances volunteered to complete the arrangements, leaving the hostess to her flour tray. After her departure from the kitchen the officer returned, and said that he desired all the family to retire very early that night.

Mrs. Darrach replied somewhat deprecatingly:

"Thee's pretty hard upon me, to-day. My cousin, the young woman thee sees with me this week, is going to leave me; and I'm getting some little things ready for her, against her going. We thought to stay up a little later to-night, rather than to retire earlier; but I suppose thee must be obeyed."

"Yes, Lydia, matters of importance require that the family shall be in bed early to-night. I regret to disturb your intercourse with Miss Jones; there are not too many such young women as she, but it is necessary. Still, you need not send the family to bed before nine."

"I thank thee for that, friend, and I will do as thee bids me; see what a plight thee has caught me in—" here she held up her hands—"I shall have to get a pass from thee to get some more of this staff of life from the mill."

"Very well," said the officer, "you shall have a pass to-morrow."

The worthy woman was about to say that she would not need it quite so soon, but the officer had turned on his heel and gone to the company of his latest caller.

When nine o'clock came all the family were duly in bed, Lydia alone remaining downstairs to admit the expected callers. She fancied that they would be late in arriving, but they appeared with surprising promptness. General Howe had come from his home on High Street, and with his arrival Lydia was informed that she might retire until she was needed to attend the departing guests.

Lydia sought her room, but not to sleep. Something peculiar in the manner of the adjutant-general, and the aspect of his visitors, led her to suspect that a crisis was at hand; and her restlessness was so great that she mused upon the propriety of trying to discover the nature of the conference.

Fortunately, Frances was not asleep. The thought of home made her wakeful, and her mind reverted to the incidents of her stay in town. Besides, she pondered upon the mystery connected with the disguised caller, being still quite at sea in her guessing.

"Frances," exclaimed Mrs. Darrach, "I want thy

wise opinion concerning an unpleasant thing. Does thee think one may ever do evil that good may come?"

Her cousin replied, "I should say 'No,' without better understanding your question."

"I am in trouble concerning my duty to myself and to my country. I think—and perhaps the Spirit has moved me to think it—that the council of the officers to-night means much harm to Washington and the country; and I feel it borne in upon me that I must try to hear what may be said. Yet it is repugnant to me to play the part of a spy, or eavesdropper—I never did such a thing in my lifetime. What does thee think of it?"

To the ingenuous Frances the query was a hard nut to crack; nor did she attempt it rashly, for she loved conscientiousness. But without answering directly she reverted to the original form of the question, and said, "Are you sure, Lydia, that it would be doing evil, if by that means you could serve your country?"

"That is the very question I want thee to help me to decide. It seems so mean a thing to listen to the private conversation of others, or to pry into their affairs in any way. Now I am sure thee can give me some good advice."

"I am not so sure of that, Lydia, and I look upon your conscience as being a better guide than mine, because it is so well cultivated. Really, Lydia, while I sympathize with you in your feeling, I think that it may be you can serve your country greatly by yielding to this prompting. It would always be wrong to

do evil, that good may come; but in a case like this I should think it would not be doing evil, to listen with patriotic motives. If evil men conspire to do wickedness, surely the righteous are at liberty to overhear their conspiracies, so as to save themselves from the lion's jaws. I could not say that it would be right to tell an untruth to escape injury, but there is very little doubt that it would be right simply to listen with the view of preventing evil."

"Thee has made a distinction that helps me; yet I shrink from putting my ear to a keyhole, to hear what the officers may say."

The scrupulous woman sighed, and a moment after remarked, "Perhaps I will do well to sacrifice my feelings to the good cause." Then she said, "If it is to be done I had better do it without delay."

She kissed Frances and stole away toward the room of the council so noiselessly that she might have been classed with the fairies. No light shone in the entry, but Lydia could feel hot blushes suffusing her cheeks and temples as she bowed her head to the keyhole.

It was an uncomfortable posture, and her conscientious qualms were so marked, that she was on the point of giving up the attempt when her ear caught a word that entirely changed the current of her feelings. A new wave of emotion swept over her, and she was thrilled with the conception of a duty speedily opening to her mind.

In the midst of her listening a step approached the door. Lydia was frightened, for she had not thought of the door being opened until the conclusion



of the council. But she flew to her room with incredible swiftness. Just after she had softly closed the door she heard voices in the entry, and a merry laugh from several persons at the expense of another, who protested that he had heard hard breathing, and supposed that some one was either standing at the door or passing it. Lydia was now dubious as to what course to follow. Greater courage was required to attempt the risky feat the second time. But again the call of patriotism sounded in her ears, and she tremblingly trod the floor of the entry in thick stockings. No further alarm occurred in the council, and perhaps the sharp-eared officer felt mortified at his apparent mistake; but Lydia took the hint and controlled her breathing. This time she listened profoundly and long, while her heart beat fast at the revelations made by the deep voices in the room.

At last she heard the familiar voice of the adjutant-general read an order of attack upon Washington's camp for the following night, which appeared to have the approval of all present, with assurances of coöperation. The remarks that were now made were of such a nature that Lydia perceived that the business was effected, and that it was unnecessary, if not perilous, to remain any longer at the door. She glided off to her room, and lay down. In perhaps twenty minutes a knock was heard at her door, which she was slow in answering. Upon responding to a second or third call she dallied some minutes, and then appeared, and led the visitors out into the street. A few incautious remarks at part-

ing convinced her that no change had been made in the program, and she sought her room in a whirl of excitement previously unknown to her, not to sleep but to counterplot.

In a whisper she communicated to Frances, who lay at her side, the gist of what she had overheard, and asked what she ought to do. But before any definite procedure suggested itself Lydia referred to a startling feature that came to her attention during the eavesdropping.

"I heard them talking about thy home, Frances, and the name of that young man who visited thy mother with his mother was mentioned, I am sure. The man who spoke most about the country seemed to know it as well as though he lived there, and he did not talk like an officer."

It flashed upon Frances that it might be that strange civilian she admitted early in the evening. Who could he be?

"The same voice spoke of the maker of iron at the Valley Forge, and of his being a spy—something about sauerkraut and peddling, and how he had discovered his tricks."

Then Frances understood it. The familiar but muffled voice—the features disguised with a beard—yes, it was now clear enough; it was Will Tryon. And Frances groaned at the treason.

Little sleep came to the eyelids of the cousins that night; and with the morning light Lydia had settled on a plan by which she might hope to baffle the tactful Howe.

She had already persuaded Frances to remain two

days more; and when breakfast was ended, and the dishes put away carefully, Lydia rapped at the door of the drowsy adjutant-general and said, "I will thank thee for that pass, that I may procure the flour of which I spoke last evening."

"All right, Lydia, you shall have it as soon as I can stir about. We made a night of it last night; and I'm as sleepy as a hedgehog in winter."

But the polite officer aroused himself, prepared the pass, and dropped it outside the door, with the hope that Lydia might have a safe and speedy trip.

Far up to Frankford, through the snow that inaugurated an early winter, plodded the heroic woman, bag in hand. At the mill, full five miles distant, she left her bag, and hastened with eager steps toward Washington's camp. Fortunately for the excited heroine's weary frame, she met Lieutenant-Colonel Craig, on his way to gather items of information respecting the enemy. To him she told her discovery, and begged him while laying it before the commander-in-chief to withhold her name, which he promised to do.

Then the faithful creature returned to the mill and secured her heavy bag of flour, but walked home relieved of a heavier mental burden. Frances rejoiced with her at the success of her simple plan, and both women anxiously awaited the consummation.

That night they observed the march of the British troops toward White Marsh, and knew that they were confident of success. But the ubiquitous Captain McLane with a small force attacked them

on the Germantown road about eleven o'clock, and harassed them until daybreak, when they encamped at Chestnut Hill. There was now no possibility of effecting a surprise, and a three days' skirmish showed Howe that he could not advantageously give battle; so he stole away to the comforts of the fireside, and resigned himself to the indolence of an inactive winter.

And Lydia rejoiced when her redcoat guests returned, empty of spoil and grumbling at their barren adventure. The adjutant-general closely catechised her as to the whereabouts of her family on that important evening, and was assured that all of them were in their beds.

"As for yourself, Lydia, I know that you were in bed, for you took so long to answer when I knocked at your door. Alack-a-day! how could the thing leak out!"

And Lydia answered neither yea nor nay. But she was glad that she had mentioned the need of flour before the council met, and that the officer had not heard her explanation that she did not require it immediately.

Frances Jones, in the care of a casual visitor living near her home, rode on to the snowbound Valley, pondering in her heart the strange incidents of her visit, and wondering what episode would be next.

## CHAPTER XV

### WAR AND WEDDING

THE impatience of a lover triumphed in the selection of an early date for the wedding of Havard Brown and Ethel Thomson. The middle of December was the very earliest that Ethel would concede, and she affected to pout about that; but Havard urged that the honeymoon should anticipate the absorbing labors of the spring.

The annals of love-making need not be burdened with an enumeration of the details of the marriage preparations. Ethel's time was fully occupied; and Havard was surprised at the trifles that called for his own attention. There were also necessary some arrangements of greater importance, and his mother, who superintended these, was certainly sufficiently busy.

Somber tints succeeded the flashing hues of autumn in the Great Valley. But not even winter chill and drear could obliterate the natural beauty of the sentinel hills that guarded the charming vale; and the purple background of the Forge gap was not the least of its varied charms.

On the last of Havard's trips to the home of his ladylove he performed the duty from which lovers invariably shrink, the engagement of the officiating clergyman. Ethel, although not a member of Christ Church, was an attendant upon its services, and as a matter of course its rector was chosen for the

celebration of the nuptials. The church itself had greatly interested Havard by its style, and the incidents of its erection. It was already three quarters of a century since the first small edifice was built, and a half century since the larger structure had been built around it, public worship in the meanwhile continuing. The simplicity of the times was shown in the use of a tree as a tower for the old bell while the remodeling proceeded. Mrs. Thomson told with a relish the story of the efforts made to finish the church in accordance with Dr. Kearsley's plans, and the naïve employment of the livery of a nameless personage with which to serve the Lord of Hosts, in the erection of the second steeple, and the purchase of a chime of bells and a clock. "The Philadelphia Steeple Lottery" was entirely successful, measured by its accumulation of funds, and for a quarter century the edifice had been complete.

But its chimes did not tintinnabulate upon British ears; and their melody was also lost for a season to the patriots. The American commissary-general, foreseeing the entry of Howe's army, dispatched the bells to Trenton, to be hidden there until the invaders could be dispossessed of their urban prize.

Havard had attended Ethel to the church service, and had closely remarked the great front window and the sounding-board that canopied the minister, as in his canonicals he read the lessons and the homily of the day.

The rector was the Rev. Jacob Duché, whose fame had both reached its zenith and suffered an inglorious eclipse. Not only Philadelphia, but the

whole country, rang with his praises, when, at the first meeting of the Continental Congress, he offered a prayer for the divine blessing upon its perilous project. It was on Monday, the fifth of September, 1774, when that simple yet august body of lovers of their country met in Carpenters' Hall. Mr. Cushing, of Massachusetts, moved that the session be opened with prayer, but objections were made on the score of divisions in religious sentiment. Mr. Samuel Adams, broad in his views, proposed that the Rev. Mr. Duché, a man of piety and virtue, and a devoted friend of America, be requested to read prayers on the following morning. The motion carried, and Peyton Randolph, president of the Congress, called upon Mr. Duché, and preferred the request, which was granted.

At the opening hour next morning the reverend gentleman appeared with his clerk, and read several prayers of the established order of service, followed by the Psalter for the day, including the thirty-fifth psalm. Coming upon the heels of the rumor of a cannonade in Boston, it seemed divinely directed, and suited to the distressful situation. Then the rector, as if inspired by the occasion, burst into an extempore prayer of such pathos and sublimity that the entire Congress was electrified. The Rev. Mr. White, afterward Bishop, noted however, that of all the body of statesmen only George Washington knelt.

In 1776 Mr. Duché was elected chaplain of Congress, but resigned in October, directing his salary to be given to the families of officers who had fallen

in battle. But, alas! when the British came into Philadelphia like a cloud, the good man's faith failed, and he wrote to the American commander-in-chief recommending that the patriotic cause be abandoned as hopeless. When the latter sent the offensive letter to Congress it was answered by the minister's own brother-in-law.

It seems scarcely appropriate that such vulgar matters as relate to food and drink should enter into the holy demesne of matrimonial topics; but Ethel's mother took solace to herself in the relief that had lately come to housekeepers from the opening of navigation in the river. It was her design that the wedding feast should be as elaborate as custom enjoined. But the Continental Cerberus at Red Bank and Mud Island had very effectually blockaded the passage of relief ships, on one hand, while on the other the vigilance of Washington's scouting parties had sadly interfered with Howe's foragers, with the consequence that provisions had become extremely scarce and costly. Though a thrifty housekeeper carried coin to market, it cost her a dollar per pound for beef, while ordinary barnyard fowls brought ten shillings apiece, and plebeian potatoes as much as sixteen shillings per bushel.

Now, however, for two or three weeks the markets had become swollen with the good things of the table, and, small as such a circumstance may appear in comparison with the weightier matters of the marriage law, it lifted a burden of some importance from the maternal mind. So the prepa-



rations for the wedding dinner went forward with much of the usual smoothness.

The news of the approaching event duly spread in various directions; and through Lydia Darrach in the city, and Jennie Reese in the valley, it came to Frances Jones's ears. Later a chance meeting between Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Jones brought confirmation of the rumor. No invitation was received by Frances or her mother, for Ethel decided that the wedding should be confined to the immediate family, which was greatly to the relief of Havard, who would have found it perplexing to dispose of Frances in the event of the issue of invitations. The thorn of past relationship pricked him, but more than this he felt a manly desire to free so true a friend from embarrassment.

It was the eighteenth of December—the marriage Thursday. Dawn found the young groom already far upon his preparations. Not having replenished his stock as yet, he had procured an extra horse from Cousin Samuel Havard—the same which Ethel rode into Philadelphia after her stay at the farm—to bring her back again, happy omen!

There was danger that, riding Saladin, he might be mistaken for a gallant officer of the enemy by some scouting party of British, for he was sprucely dressed in a well-fitting, rich suit of blue, with white waistcoat and greatcoat; and his mother was afraid that the soil of travel would bedim his luster.

Passing underneath the signboard of the "King," Havard observed the roads patrolled by Continental guards, who, he supposed, were connected with the

late movement of the army from White Marsh. As he rode through the Gulph ravine, the trees bare, and the ground beneath them strewn with the fallen foliage, he perceived a line of sentinels, from which he inferred that he should soon see an encampment.

Emerging from the ravine, he found the army clustered upon the hillside, and in the basin at its foot. The breath of winter was apparent, yet the soldiers had but flimsy tents in which to imagine a shelter from the blasts that souged in the branches of the oaks and chestnuts. Their wretched clothing and lack of blankets touched the young man to the heart.

Havard was sufficiently interested in the encampment to scan it in every direction. It was an unusual number of men of war; and the officers who rode about, and the cannon, impressed him. As he journeyed on he found that the picket line extended for several miles to the eastward. It was nearly eleven o'clock when Havard rode up to the house of his beloved, and it was but turned the hour when his steeds were transferred to the care of a nearby hostler, and he knocked at the front door.

It was Ethel who met her affianced, and escorted him into the parlor. To his delight it was unoccupied, and he emphasized that fact by bestowing upon her a tender caress, while he whispered his joy that the long-looked-for day had come at last. But the roguish girl reminded him that he had really been so precipitate in his lovemaking that it could not have been *long* looked for, whereupon he responded

in another salute, which she declared would compel her to readjust her toilet for the ceremony.

Havard had been present in the Valley meeting-house when William Walker and Sarah Wells solemnized their nuptials. He remembered well the sunny day in May in the midweek meeting, when the congregation, sensibly increased by the knowledge of the event, and numbering many not exactly of Friends' faith and practice, gathered in the plain structure built amid the rolling dales of the eastern section of Chester County.

Quietly all sat in the simple benches; while through the open windows came the fragrant scent of spicewood and shrubs. The white blossoms of the cherry trees were driven by occasional breezes into the house of worship, and fell at the feet of the waiting congregation, while the carolings of feathered songsters furnished a natural music to the place from which instruments of art and vocal harmonies were alike banished.

Presently a subdued thrill passed through the apparently impassive gathering, and William and Sarah entered the room. How touching it was to witness their demeanor as they bravely moved up to the front seats and faced the company! Happily it was not staring eyes that met their own—eyes full of vulgar curiosity, determined to daunt the timid bride and, if the truth were known, the equally timid groom. Rarely did their eyes meet those of any in the congregation; for with becoming modesty and reverence, the latter usually directed their gaze to the floor; but it was not in human nature not to

glance occasionally at the interesting pair, yet the look was always so kindly and sympathetic that it gave no umbrage when detected.

A comparatively long silence was at last broken by a Friend in the elevated seats, who appeared in supplication, the congregation standing while he knelt. After another pause a visiting minister was moved to preach upon the sweetness of fellowship, and especially of the sacredness of the marriage relation. No doubt the contagious inspiration of the moment would have moved others to speak or pray, but the young couple determined to terminate the lesser ordeal by courageously confronting the greater; and they arose, and, facing each other, William took Sarah's hand, and said, "In the presence of the Lord, and this assembly, I take Sarah Wells to be my wife, promising with divine assistance to be unto her a loving and faithful husband, until death shall separate us."

There was a silence that could be felt when he concluded, and Sarah, copying the action, tremulously but clearly responded, "In the presence of the Lord, and this assembly, I take William Walker to be my husband, promising by divine assistance to be unto him a loving and faithful wife, until death shall separate us."

Then a certificate was brought by the elders, which was signed by the contracting parties, and also by the majority of those who were present.

It seemed like a dream to-day, as Havard fancied it enacted again. His feeling toward Ethel was affected by the pathetic beauty of that simple cere-

mony in the Valley; and, while he felt himself scarcely equal to it, he almost longed for the privilege of taking Ethel by the hand and in token of his deep affection addressing her as William did Sarah.

After a greeting from Mr. and Mrs. Thomson, and Ethel's girl friend, Miss Polly Reed, who now appeared, fresh from active but invisible duties, Havard was conscious that but a little while would probably intervene before the arrival of the minister; and now a trifling uneasiness seized him lest something might detain him. But in ample time Mr. Duché was seen through the window approaching the house, and his knock was not required to admit him.

Salutes followed, and after a brief chat the rector discovered that all was ready, when, calling upon the company to stand up, he proceeded to read the marriage service of the Church of England.

Ethel was apparently entirely self-possessed, but a regal air characterized her as she stood in the center of the parlor. A strange nervousness took possession of Havard, which he felt unable to control. Whether it was due to hyper-timidity, or to the rector's manner in the service, cannot be said. But when the groom repeated after the minister the words of holy betrothal he took courage. The prayer and the benediction were so reverent and sympathetic in tone, that an actual spiritual gift seemed to have been imparted by the rector, in whom already was working that curious mysticism which afterward became so marked a characteristic.

There were suggestions of tears in the eyes of the little company of spectators, for joy as well as sorrow has its times of weeping. And at the conclusion of the ceremony Ethel's mother was momentarily overcome as she pressed her daughter to her heart. Nor was it an unworthy sign that the bride wept freely also. But smiles dissipated the momentary sadness, and a freedom that was unknown during the repressive period before and through the service ensued, wherein all participated, and the final arrangements of the feast were consummated. A rather long wedding journey was still to be taken by the happy couple, and it was expedient that delay should not operate to their disadvantage, and darkness augment the ordinary discomfort of travel.

The rector remained to the wedding dinner, and, though dignity was never wanting in his manner, his naturalness of expression and cordiality contributed to its enjoyment. Wit and humor were not lacking, and Havard's ideas of ministerial character and habits underwent some change—but not at all to the detriment of the cloth.

Some expressions upon the part of both groom and bride exhibited their desire to lose no time in departure, and this fact induced a comparatively early close of the pleasant meal. Ethel wished to complete the journey before nightfall, because of possible contact with the roving parties constantly sent out by both armies.

In due time the bride was arrayed in traveling costume, and the horses, with certain pieces of bag-

gale attached, were brought to the door for the wedded pair.

Farewells were spoken, not without emotion on either side; and, amid good wishes and fervent prayers for long life and happy relationship, the horses' heads were turned out High Street, and the clattering of their hoofs soon ceased in the hearing of the little group that gazed after the pilgrims.

To avoid the army at the Gulph, the happy pair kept the Lancaster road without change, until they struck the Church road. The "Buck," the "Plough," and the "Spread Eagle" displayed the usual quotas of idlers, who stared at them, but, compared with an encounter with the troops, the annoyance was slight. Nightfall was but slightly advanced when they reached Mount Joy, and received such a welcome as only a solicitous mother can bestow upon her son and his bride.

Ethel remarked upon the excellence of the supper at which Mrs. Brown caused her to be seated. Delicacy and thoughtfulness manifested so naturally appealed to her gratitude, and augured well. The tea was relished by both the travelers, the excitement of the wedding being over, and the ride having induced a substantial appetite. The trio lingered long over the good cheer, for no duty pressed upon them. Pleasant projects were discussed, and plans for the future lightly and cheerfully dwelt upon; and after they had forsaken the table, and gathered by the blazing logs in the great fireplace, each built in the bright flames that played about the burning pile the castle in the air that was to be.

## CHAPTER XVI

### FORTIFIED FAVOR

THE December honeymoon was rudely disturbed before it was quite twenty-four hours old. Havard and Ethel, in consultation about some minor adornments in the sitting room, were summoned by Mrs. Brown to the front door, where she had observed a squad of soldiers engaged, as she supposed, in taking down that guardian of privacy. But when Havard opened it he discovered that marks were simply being put upon it, and the sergeant in charge informed him that the American army was coming forthwith to the vicinity of Mount Joy, and that the various houses adjacent to it would be required for the quarters of the general officers. In view of the location of the artillery park, the Brown mansion had been selected as the residence of General Knox, the chief of that arm of the service.

Even a joyous bridegroom thwarted in his plans may prove a philosopher, and we must give Havard Brown the credit of having become an intelligent patriot. Besides, whatever reluctance to entertain military strangers was experienced by the Browns was shared by the entire community, who were decidedly averse to the presence of the army. To those who favored the Colonial cause—and many were only lukewarm therein—American occupation



was preferable to British, but only as a matter of sentiment; for the drain upon their resources was heavier thus than when their supplies were pre-empted by the redcoats, who gave in exchange—except in cases of recognized active “rebels”—the yellow coin of the English realm, which was vastly superior in purchasing power to the flimsy parody known as “Continental money.”

An hour after sunrise on the eleventh of the month the van of the Continental army took its departure from its stronghold in the hills about the Marsh. At Matson's Ford it crossed the Schuylkill, and got into conflict with scouting parties of Cornwallis's advance which happened to be in the neighborhood, and then retired to the east side, where it was joined by the remainder of the troops that struck their tents later in the day.

On the following day, in a severe snowstorm, the army ascended the river to the Swedes' Ford, where it prepared to cross upon thirty-six wagons backed into the stream, and covered with a platform of fence rails. All that night the uncertain bridge shook under the tread of the slowly moving and chilled patriots, and at sunrise they took up their line of march for the nearby Gulph, whose important pass it was desirable to fortify against the occupation of the enemy. It was here where Havard saw them on the last day but one of their stay, which covered six days. On the road to the Gulph the prints of bloody feet were discernible, and in several cases men perished from exposure.

Now a ragged army came up the Gulph road,

divided, crossed the fields here and there, to places arranged for by the engineers who had reconnoitered the locality, and took post upon the elevated ground. To the wondering eyes of the comparatively few citizens who saw the unwonted sight it appeared as though a swarm of mammoth bees had settled upon the roads and the fields. The fences were taken down, and the trampling of hundreds of men over the most direct route to designated points speedily converted the gray fields into highways.

But the elevations were mostly covered with forests, and some of the trees were of noble girth and height. Among the sturdy followers of Washington were men of considerable practice in clearing land, and these attacked the trees in every direction, until hundreds of giants were prone upon the ground. The Browns, with many others, groaned at this consumption of the woods, but looked with curiosity upon the progress of the work of fortifying and hutting the soldiery.

For the moment, however, interest was transferred to the personal side, for before night the officer whom they were involuntarily to entertain arrived and took possession of his quarters. It was a stout, compact man whom they saluted as General Knox. Havard recollected to have heard, that he was formerly a Boston bookseller, and had distinguished himself as a volunteer at the engagement on Breed's Hill. His movements and manner were essentially those of a business man, and Havard was favorably impressed with his methods of administration in connection with his own command. There were

frequent opportunities for conversation between the general and his host, and the former was not averse to speaking upon authors and their productions, and thus conferred upon Havard some valuable favors.

The general's comparative youth was another element which created a species of bond between himself and his host, for he still lacked three years of being thirty. His close relation to Washington, who reposed an affectionate confidence in him, was a circumstance that brought gratification to Havard, who thereby enjoyed an occasional glimpse of the illustrious commander-in-chief.

Far up on the southern slope of Mount Joy, facing the Brown mansion, the troops commenced a long intrenchment. The hard picking in the stony soil, though very wearisome, had at least the beneficial effect of keeping the workmen warm while engaged in it; for the intense cold was already unfavorably affecting them. Their toil continued until, in an unbroken line, several thousand feet of embankment stretched away to the eastward and northward.

Below, in front of the western portion, lay Woodford's Virginians. Farther to the east was a redoubt named after the commanding general, while across the Church road, on an eminence well suited to the control of the adjacent country, though not so high as Mount Joy, another line of intrenchments extended toward the river, at a point two and a half miles below the Forge. Scott and Wayne and Poor lay upon this rising ground, while beyond them Glover, Learned, Patterson, Weedon, and Muhlen-

berg held the line of resistance to the encroachment of the British. Knox's artillery was stationed a little to the west of the Gulph road, while the remainder of the troops found positions on the road parallel with the river, commanding Fatland Ford.

The hutting of the troops proceeded as rapidly as possible. Havard learned some lessons from the ingenuity of these crude architects. Each hut was fourteen by sixteen feet, and was made of logs, those of the roof being closed with split slabs. The sides were made more compact with clay, and a fireplace was provided of wood covered with clay. The slab door fronted the street. In the rear of the huts of the private soldiers were those of the officers. The population of a hut of the rank and file consisted of a round dozen men.

The generous chieftain called so providentially to the command of the army was touched by the sufferings of his men, and exhibited his sympathy by pitching his tent beneath a fine oak in the vicinity of the artillery, where he remained until the hutting was accomplished, when he requested that the Potts mansion be granted him for general headquarters.

It was some time before Havard's desire to see the entire cordon of the encampment was gratified, for a great snow fell upon the land, and those who had no urgent business to call them from their homes were only too glad to remain there in snug comfort. Havard was returning one day from an errand some distance up the river, when light flakes dropped from the leaden clouds that canopied the hills and river, and soon the feathery messengers

fell in myriads. By the time he reached Valley Creek the ground was white, and on the limbs of the leafless trees was a thick and increasing stratum of snow. The rare beauty of the winter scenery struck Havard anew as he turned up the little stream and saw the falling host outlined against the background of the hills on both its sides. At the bend near the site of the burnt forge the ravine was imposing in its winter dress, and the soft rustle of the vapory particles, as they fell upon leaf or bush, added to the impressiveness of the scene. Faster and faster they were scattered by the invisible reservoirs of the upper air, and the forms of the sentinels, as they paced their beats at the foot of Mount Joy, along the creek road, were only dimly visible at even a little distance. The picture was one that Havard long remembered, for many a slumber in after years was obtruded upon by penumbral figures, bearing muskets, pacing wearily back and forth in the recesses of the ravine.

The snowfall continued until the country was immaculate in a bridal dress. The forests were full, the few roads the country knew were filled, and the roofs of the houses and barns that dotted the locality were groaning under white burdens. Anon the sun came out of his cloudy bed, and the effect of his golden beams upon the snowy hills and vales was bewitching.

But the privations of the soldiers could not be concealed by æsthetics in either nature or art, and the hard times of the encampment waxed worse. Both food and clothing were very scarce, and it

chilled Havard to the heart to see sentinels scantily clad, with feet wrapped in rags, patrolling their stations of duty. But he saw many such sights.

It was a splendid struggle in which these worthy souls endured during the long and severe winter. But human nature exhibited its propensities at times, and men wandered away in all directions in the search after food. Some of them roamed for miles around, often in danger from foraging parties of the British. The hospitable home of the Neilleys, in the glen near Peggy Hambleton's, entertained many a half-starved soldier with the best it could afford, which was usually a large platter of boiled mush, served in the cellar upon a great rock that had not been excavated from its position. Here, secure from curious eyes, the nearly famished stragglers ate for once to repletion and blessed the kind hearts of the donors for their practical sympathy.

"Ethel," said Havard one afternoon, "do you remember that young fellow we saw gunning when we rode into town after the burning of your uncle's house?"

"Do you mean the one who shot a rabbit in the road?"

"Yes, young Beaver, the crack shot."

"O, yes, I recollect him very well; he seemed a very slender young man."

"Well, he's in trouble now, because he shot a soldier this morning."

"Shot a soldier! Why, is he British in his affiliations?"

"No, his family sympathize with the Colonies;

but the soldiers have been very troublesome over at his home, especially in milking the cows, and to-day Dewalt shot one, who was caught at the job."

"What will be done with him? Surely it will go hard with him!"

"There is very little chance for him unless his story be believed. When the soldiers got so troublesome he went to see General Wayne over at Walker's, who said, "Why don't you shoot the rascals? The next time they bother you, give them a bullet!" To-day Dewalt saw a man milking their fine old Brindle, and he leveled his musket at him and killed him. He thought, when he fired, that it was a strange soldier, but he found that it was the very sentinel himself. This man, too, it seems, slyly helped himself to anything he could get to eat, and while Dewalt's father was very sick, and Dewalt waiting on him, the fellow thought he would take advantage of their absence to refresh himself, and then this dreadful thing happened. If Wayne remembers that he told him to shoot it may turn out all right,<sup>1</sup> but it must shock him very much, anyway."

Ethel had not yet visited the Potts house. One day, when it became feasible to take a short trip about the country, Havard took her on the pillion of his saddle, and they rode up to the pleasant stone mansion in which the general of the American armies found shelter during the dreary winter of 1777-78. With innate delicacy they refrained from any undue exhibition of curiosity, and yet Ethel

<sup>1</sup> He was exonerated, but with a heavy fine.



HOME OF ISAAC POTTS (WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS)





took care to secure as good a view of the premises as a hasty glance could encompass. But an unlooked-for incident occurred.

Pacing up and down before the front door was a sentinel, whose face indicated that hunger and cold were preying upon him. Evidently the commander-in-chief had noticed his pitiful pallor, for the door opened and he approached the soldier, who, recognizing the person, halted and saluted.

"My man," said a full, mature, and sympathetic voice, that clearly reached the ears of both Havard and Ethel, "you look very cold and uncomfortable; have you had your breakfast?"

"No, sir, your excellency," responded the sentinel, very much embarrassed, and scarcely knowing what to say; "no, sir, General—that is, not since yesterday morning."

"My poor fellow, this is too bad—too bad entirely," groaned the kind-hearted chieftain; then, smiling he continued: "You must do me the honor to breakfast at my table. I have no doubt that there is something that the cook can furnish you, although I could wish to offer my brave men much better fare."

The bewildered soldier protested that he would be overwhelmed with such attention, and that he could not think of intruding in the house; but the general insisted, and when the man, driven to his last recourse, explained that he must not leave his post without a representative, the great leader of the Continental armies stepped into the house, put on his army cape and chapeau, and upon emerging

relieved the sentinel of his gun, and, bidding him warm himself thoroughly before coming back from his breakfast, began to walk back and forth with a military bearing and precision that would have won applause from a martinet.

The unwonted sight profoundly touched Havard and brought tears to the eyes of his wife. They were lingering near, feeling awkward, and not knowing whether to precipitately retire or utter some word of respect. The general must have divined their state of mind, for, raising his chapeau, he saluted the young lady gravely, and then most engagingly bade her and her companion "Good morning." The ice being broken, Havard came forward and begged the favor of introducing himself and his wife to the general. As he had mentioned his name, the latter said:

"You forget, Mr. Brown, that the lady is under all circumstances the person to whom the greater respect is to be shown, and that gentlemen, when privileged, are to be introduced to her. I shall be highly favored if you will present me to Mrs. Brown."

The simple-hearted farmer was so completely embarrassed that he could only stammer some feeble words of introduction; but Washington politely ignored his helpless blundering, and entered with freedom upon his usual charming vein when in conversation with the fair sex. Whether he saw in Ethel some faint reflection of the "lowland beauty" whom he had admired in his youthful days we cannot tell, but his address was pleasing. To Havard's

astonishment he discovered that his name was not unknown to the general, who distinctly spoke in appreciation of the service he had rendered in securing valuable information in the camp of Knyphausen, and in the removal of the stores; which led him to believe that the general-in-chief knew much more about the minor operations of the army than he could have supposed possible.

Presently, warmed and filled after the scriptural fashion, the sentinel reappeared, gratitude swimming in his eyes, and a ruddier glow tingeing his cheeks than he had displayed for several weeks. He seemed too affected to utter his thanks, but Washington anticipated his expressions and turned the tide of feeling by humorously bestowing upon him his weapon of war.

Then, turning to his new acquaintances, the general remarked that he would be pleased to have them call upon Mrs. Washington when she came to share the comforts of his winter home; and though he smiled at the allusion it was not cynically, for his appreciation of the provision made by the Pottses was sincere. Learning, in response to his inquiries, that they would be glad to take a little tour of inspection down the river road, he begged to be excused for a moment, and very shortly reappeared bearing a pass. Then, again raising his military hat, he bade them adieu.

As there was plenty of time at their disposal for such a trip, the pair rode slowly up the hill, and, after passing the turn at the Gulph road, saw on the right the troops of McIntosh's Georgia brigade.

Down the Gulph road could be discerned Conway's Pennsylvanians, while over to the left, close to the river, was Washington's body-guard.

Farther down the road, on the brow of the hill, was stretched the inner line of intrenchments; the "Star Redoubt," or "Fort Platt," stood exactly in the highway, and beyond it to the right was a substantial redoubt known as "Fort Huntington." To the left lay Sullivan, and preparations were already making under that general's supervision for a bridge across the Schuylkill. After crossing the military street that led down to the river, Varnum's Rhode Islanders were encountered, on the right. A row of huts for officers was next seen on the left, and from these high grounds the general arrangement of the camp ground could easily be distinguished—the only obstacle in any case being the thick growth of trees.

Altogether, even to a civilian's eye, the ground had been well selected to protect an army from attack. The supine Howe was not likely to bestir himself to assault such hills of forest and stone; but the grip of winter was upon the devoted army, and there were already entertained serious questions of a successful combat with the bleak winds, the depleted larder, and the lack of clothing and shoes.

The ice-locked river, covered with snow, lay like a winding sheet in the soft white landscape, its beautiful curves refining the scenery of the deep hills that bordered it. Hillocks here and there, knolls and knobs, and little vales, diversified the view, and over all was spread the ermine robe of a

princess. The effect of the sunshine was fascinating, and every tree and bush seemed arrayed in a sort of Christmas holiday attire. And yet the tenantry of the hills by armed men, who had sprung up as if by magic, like the host from the dragon's teeth sown by Cadmus, imparted to it all a novel appearance that completely transformed the rural neighborhood.

While still traveling eastward the pair met a guard who was a resident of the Valley and an acquaintance, who informed Havard that General Varnum's headquarters were at David Stephens's, General Huntington's at Maurice Stephens's, and General Muhlenberg's at Moore's, beyond the redoubt known as "Moore's Fort"; while the commissary-general occupied a house on Mordecai Moore's farm, somewhat in front of "Fort Folly"—a redoubt at the east end of the outer line of intrenchments.

It was a fruitful and invigorating ride, and as Havard turned his horse's head homeward he felt that his scope of military knowledge was widened. His return was by a shorter route, that took him past the artillery park, where Ethel received the salute of General Knox, who was inspecting the arrangement of the guns. He also noted the strong commanding position of "Fort Washington," and the almost impregnable line far above, where no phalanx would be apt to venture in the teeth of cannon and a well-directed musketry fire.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE HUMDRUM OF HONOR

CHRISTMAS DAY, 1777, possessed few externals with which to cheer the hearts of the men of Valley Forge. The wretched condition of the commissary, the dearth of clothing suited to the rigor of the season, together with the dreary mental atmosphere, put to the severest test the faithful followers of the star of liberty—now, alas! of such faint magnitude. And yet hogsheads of shoes, socks, and warm garments were spoiling in various localities for lack of teams, or money to provide transportation.

Upon the commander-in-chief fell even a deeper shadow than that which obscured the cold huts of the common soldiers. Their faith in their general was still unshaken, although their miseries were great. But upon him rested the accumulated burdens of the campaign, and in addition the bitterness of the knowledge of a shameful conspiracy. The "Conway Cabal" was tugging away at his great heart like a cancer; yet, notwithstanding its attempt upon his reputation and position, he stood firm in the performance of his duty to his bleeding country.

Although he was well aware that Gates's victory at Saratoga would strengthen the hands of the abettors of the mischievous scheme to supplant him in rank,

his manner upon learning the glorious tidings was described by Colonel Timothy Pickering as "ecstatic." The quivering of his lips, the failure of his utterance, the clasp of his hands, and his upward gaze indicated his powerful feeling of joy at the moment, and exhibited the patriot in all his moral grandeur.

But the shadows had deepened, and in the gigantic struggle with fate Washington's soul was harrowed with anxiety. He might have relieved himself of much of his load by resigning his military position, but he knew that the peril of his country would only be increased thereby. And in the full knowledge of the contemptuous words that were spoken and the scornful letters that were written about him he bore and forbore in a fashion that constitutes one of the brightest gems in the crown awarded him by posterity.

Havard Brown called one day at Isaac Potts's to borrow a crowbar, and was obliged to wait for the householder's appearance. When he came in he appeared greatly agitated, and for a few moments could scarcely speak. But, controlling his emotions with some effort, he responded to the anxious inquiries of his wife:

"Thee knows I went up the creek to get some wood piled on the hill across from the forge. Thee knows, too, that the rotten oak fell across the creek last week. I thought I would go around that way and see about cutting it up for firewood, but when I turned aside into the grove by the stream I was startled by a voice speaking in a different way from



that used by people in conversing. I could not tell the words, and, wondering what it meant, I went farther in its direction until I heard someone say, 'It is by Thy strength alone that this great work can be wrought, and the liberty of Thy people brought to pass. Thou knowest that I am unable to lead them out of bondage into happiness and peace, and that enemies are risen up against me such as breathe out cruelty.' I went still farther toward the spot whence the voice appeared to proceed, and soon I observed, deep in the woods, the kneeling form of our guest. I could see that he was in tears, and that he shook as if his burden were too great to be borne. His voice trembled, and indeed I thought he would be overcome."

The good Mrs. Potts caught the contagion of her husband's emotion. Her pious soul a few years earlier had been made to rejoice at her husband's awakening interest in religion. He had gone with a funeral party to bury one of his slaves, and while all were collected around the grave he was strangely moved of the Spirit to utter warning words to the little group. This was all the more remarkable because until that time, although much esteemed for his kind, social qualities, he had been reticent upon spiritual matters.

Isaac Potts had not yet completed his remark. Heretofore he had been strenuously opposed to the contention for independence, and especially to its martial features; but now, while still deprecating armed resistance to the mother country, he had been convinced by the pious fervor of the commander-in-

chief that his cause was righteous; and he was led to say, "I am now firmly persuaded that George Washington is a good and great man, and that the interest he represents is just. I cannot doubt that he will prevail against his enemies, and that heaven will answer his prayer, and bless this distracted land with liberty and peace."

It was reserved for this young man—for he was now only twenty-seven years old—to speak upon the character of Washington in the Friends' meeting at Philadelphia, when the news was received that that preëminent patriot had passed away.

As the winter grew an unwelcome subject attracted the attention of the young bridegroom. It lay, originally, the merest penumbra upon his thoughts; yet, slight though it was, it refused to remove, and remained an intangible yet realistic dream or illusion. Exceedingly vague in the beginning, it became intensified, if slowly, yet surely, and though sometimes lessening—indeed, often almost vanishing—nevertheless gathering substance and body, until it became positively painful to entertain.

The original hesitancy attending Havard's courtship, and the uneasiness associated with his thought of Frances Jones, have already been noticed. It was honor rather than love that produced this vacillation—at least Havard imagined so. The obtruding unpleasantness at that time ensued from the fancied twinges of conscience at permitting Frances to cherish the view that his affection for her was more than that of mere friendship, and that honor required an offer of himself to her. But he had

succeeded, at least for a season, in satisfying the arguments advanced by his troublesome monitor, and the flattering result of his siege of Ethel's heart had dimmed his vision to the obtruding element.

The serious feature in the present case was Harvard's growing suspicion that he had been mistaken in the gauge of his own feelings. Struggle against it though he might, he came again and again to the verge of the disagreeable conviction. Nor could he explain it to himself. It humiliated him to impeach himself of criticising his wife. She retained probably as much personal charm in his eyes as ever, nevertheless there was somewhere a lack, which, while it might not be exactly defined, constituted a genuine deprivation.

Perhaps no word could better express the state of mind thus developing in the young groom than the simple but significant one of "disappointment!"

It was not a sudden revelation, but the slow growth of an impression so delicate as to be almost impalpable. And it was only after much ebb and flow of thought and feeling, the waves slightly but steadily encroaching higher upon the beach, that Harvard became unable to shake it off. He was puzzled to understand himself, and began a merciless inquisition of motive, the result of which was generally uncomplimentary to himself; but still the strong though indefinable feeling developed steadily toward maturity.

There was one circumstance for which he now blamed himself unmistakably—the haste with which

he had brought the affair of the heart to a conclusion. He could now perceive, and rightly value, the advantage of an extended season of reflection before making a declaration of love; and his cheeks burned at the recollection that Ethel had hesitated and recommended a longer delay. He was forced to confess to himself that she was really the wiser of the two, and that time is imperatively necessary to permit us to become acquainted with ourselves, to say nothing of others.

By one of those curious intuitions which are quite unaccountable, Havard suspected that his mother was privy to his thoughts. He did not know how, but he would have needed to be an adept in disguise to prevent his mobile face from proclaiming his secrets. He was not aware that the deepening penumbra had settled on his countenance. As for Ethel, she found in the society of Mrs. Knox, who had come to share camp life with her husband, so much solace for her deprivation of city experience that her vision was dulled to anything strange in the manner of her husband.

Ethel had intelligently anticipated something like monotony in the rural surroundings that offered in connection with her approaching wedding; but she hoped that Havard could be aroused to more interest in society, and that certain compensating pleasures would come to her in exchange for the loss of prized conveniences—especially in the recreations of the open summer season. While, however, the presence of the army imposed some restrictions, Ethel's inclinations found a larger gratification in

the social privileges growing out of the establishment of various headquarters in the houses nearby.

The interchange of visits upon the part of the general officers and their staffs gradually made Ethel acquainted with quite a number of the gentlemen and their wives, and also with the ladies in the families of those who entertained them. Two homes within comparatively close reach furnished unusual attractions. The first was that of the Rev. William Currie, a half mile or more across the creek, and lying on the hillside.

The learned and venerable rector, who was of Scottish birth and a graduate of the University of Glasgow, was highly esteemed for his fidelity to clerical duty. But for a year and a half he had ceased to sustain a direct pastoral relation to the people at Radnor, Saint Peter's and Saint James's, because of his unwillingness to omit prayers for the king, upon which his congregation insisted. He already had attained fourscore years, but was destined to complete another decade of service. He died aged ninety-three years.

There was something fascinating about the house itself, with its great fireplaces and immense chimneys, the two pairs of stairs—one in each end—for the accommodation of two families, the odd style of window in the western gable, and the quaint little panes of glass. The stout oak floors also witnessed to the substantialness of the dwelling, while the spring-house in the rear, the bakehouse, and the barn in front strengthened the impression of convenience and plenty.

The hospitalities of the house were dispensed by the rector's granddaughter, Margaret Currie Walker, who, being the grandniece of two signers of the Declaration of Independence, was, as might have been expected, an ardent well-wisher of the American cause. But she still maintained her love for the ancient service of the Church of England, and related with much piquancy how her husband, Thomas Walker, was disciplined by the Society of Friends for marrying her.

Ethel became sincerely attached to Mrs. Walker; and the ex-rector's fund of conversation was instructive and entertaining. But his spirit was saddened by the illness and death, in February, of his second wife, whom he laid at rest in the churchyard of Saint David's.

Lord Stirling had taken up his quarters here, and this nobleman's wife, a daughter of Philip Livingston, of New York, added materially to the social circle. The patriotism of the general was marked, and he had resigned his claims to the peerage to serve his country. His record in Shirley's campaigns in the French and Indian war was shining, and his exploits in the revolt against the mother country extended his reputation. Notwithstanding the difference in their political views, the man of war and the man of peace enjoyed their lengthy chats.

The other home to which we have referred was situated on the same side of the creek with that of Havard Brown, and belonged to his second cousin, Samuel Havard. A winding road led up to the house, which stood on a knoll overlooking the creek.

Chimney and fireplace resembled those of the Currie house. To look through its rear windows upon the pretty stream flowing through the meadow was much enjoyed by Ethel.

Two adjoining rooms on the first floor were monopolized by that youthful general, the Marquis de Lafayette, whom Cornwallis contemptuously styled "the boy." His staff shared with him the shelter of the stout walls against the boreal blasts of the dispiriting winter. But the general was not a constant resident of the house. He had received some lay surgical treatment at Abijah Stephens's, and afterward he was summoned away upon a manufactured mission by the designing plotters of the "Cabal," who hoped to use him for their own base ends by weaning him from Washington. Here, too, congregated the foreigners who served in the army; the attraction naturally arising from greater familiarity of language being emphasized by the unpleasant circumstance that some of the native officers regarded them with coldness and suspicion. In due season General Duportail, Count Pulaski, and the Barons De Kalb and Steuben paid their respects in this same home to the young Marquis.

To Havard Brown's inexperienced eye the state of discipline in the army was not only depressing but alarming. Besides, rust covered the arms of the soldiers, fully half of the muskets being without bayonets, and many of them could not have been discharged. All the accouterments were in shocking condition, and under other circumstances the appearance of the troops would have excited ridicule.

Havard was first made aware of the arrival of Baron Steuben, and of his rank, by seeing him facing the troops in the drill, which proceeded from early morning until night, without intermission, during all the weeks succeeding his coming. It was up on the high, level ground beyond the Star Redoubt, and near the officers' huts.

It was the peculiar language of the inspector-general—for such was Steuben's appointment—that drew Havard's attention to the drill. Looking up, he noticed the motley ranks standing at "attention." Uniforms they had none—indeed, it might be said that clothing some of them had none, for they were almost literally naked. A few of the officers had coats, in which all colors were represented. Even on grand parade officers were glad to have a rude gown constructed of ancient blankets or bed covers.

The poor privates were variously supplied with firearms; some had muskets, some shotguns, some rifles, and some carbines. Many had tin boxes in place of the usual pouches, and some had powder horns.

The baron, who was not yet fifty, was full of energy, and proved extremely efficient. But this Prussian drillmaster was irascible, and the awkward attempts of the soldiers to obey his commands excited him to such a degree that he could hardly control his rage. It was very difficult to understand his orders, for his knowledge of English was almost *nil*; yet he seemed to expect that his wishes would be intuitively comprehended. Since they were not, his disappointment found vent in



expletives of extraordinary range and vehemence, and this it was that startled Havard. The men were bewildered by his anger; and their stupidity, as the baron termed it, waxed greater rather than less, until the indignant man, in sheer inability to swear any more, begged one of his staff to procure someone who could employ the code of cursing more effectually!

But this was the greatest of his infirmities. His work soon told in the discipline of the ragged army. Rising before daylight, making a careful toilet, and refreshing himself with a single cup of coffee, it was his habit to mount his horse before sunrise, when he expected to meet his men. And in every battle that followed these long weeks of tiresome repetition of the manual of arms, never again did his disciples of the drill lose a battle in which their numbers were equal to those of the enemy!

Havard was interested at the same time in the building of the bridge across the Schuylkill. Sullivan's men lay between Fatland Ford and Isaac Potts's, and his New Englanders were called upon to span the river. Piers were placed in the stream at regular intervals; and on these were stretched pieces of timber that supported the slab flooring. Wooden pins fastened the whole. When the bridge was finished, in the spring, a number of the residents were invited to walk over it with the officers who examined it. Havard heard David Stephens telling General Sullivan that the first freshet would carry it away, and, sure enough, notwithstanding the general's indignant denial of the

possibility of such a circumstance, the breaking up of the ice in the river in the early spring of 1779 resulted in the sweeping off of all the material resting on the top of the piers.

The particular social event of the season was the arrival, early in February, of Mrs. Washington. Cheerfully she wrote to her friends of the discomforts of army life, and naïvely acknowledged her satisfaction with the log addition to the house, built by the general's orders, to provide a "dining room." It was a great day at the Browns' when she accompanied her husband to call upon Mrs. Knox, for they too, were included in the simple sociability of the occasion.

Upon several Sabbaths the distinguished couple rode over to Saint David's, and sat in the little room afterward to be made famous by the pen of Longfellow. The cheery mistress of Mount Vernon insisted upon climbing the exterior staircase, to see the arrangement of the gallery, which could not be entered from the inside of the building.

As if there were not enough variety in the novel state of affairs about the burnt forge, Havard experienced a curious *rencontre* one dark evening, while on his way to the headquarters of Dr. Jonathan Potts, the medical director of the army. Mrs. Knox had suffered during the day with severe pains in her head, but felt unwilling to disturb the physician, whose labors were known to be exacting. But when bedtime was near her spasms of pain increased to such an extent that she consented to have the doctor summoned. It was the general's

purpose to dispatch an aid, but Havard's greater familiarity with the roads on so obscure a night caused his ready proffer to be accepted; and he at once set out for the chief hospital, where the doctor was believed to be.

A singular presentiment took possession of him as he prepared to leave the house. His greatcoat hung in the kitchen, and, as he put it on, and faced the window opening upon the yard, he recollected how he had once seen through it the face of Will Tryon. So powerful was the impression made at that time, and so keenly did he remember it, that he now seemed to see with the utmost clearness, through the very same pane, the face of that disturber of the peace.

He also fancied, as he halted a moment by the horse block, and looked up at the threatening sky, that he heard the tramping of feet in the dry leaves which were gathered in a pile in the barnyard, to be used as bedding for the cattle. This, too, however, was attributed to the influence of the night and of recollections.

Havard found the doctor, after successfully passing the guards, and delivered the message of the general's wife. The worthy Galen, a brother of the owner of the general headquarters, responded at once to the call, and accompanied the young man home.

On the way Dr. Potts startled Havard with the information that of the eleven thousand troops in the encampment few more than five thousand were fit for duty, and that if Howe had a tithe of Wash-

ington's courage and persistence the issue of an attack could scarcely be doubtful. The communication was made in a whisper.

In the same low tone he continued: "We have hundreds sick of smallpox at this moment in the eleven hospitals we are using; nothing can be done to prevent the spread of this loathsome disease—but perhaps"—and the doctor chuckled with the careless ease of a man who is familiar with dangers—"Howe would not like to tackle us."

"Who comes there?" rang out the call from a sentinel, who could not have seen or heard their approach. Evidently there was someone else abroad that dark and lowering night. Havard heard the response, which he recognized as coming from Colonel Dewees, who had been absent from the vicinity so long as to have excited his wonder.

Pressing forward, Havard revealed himself to the colonel, who begged pardon of the doctor for whispering to his friend, and then informed Havard that he had been engaged in secret service of which he might not speak in general, but now was looking up matters relating to Will Tryon. Havard involuntarily started, and told of his strange impression earlier in the evening. The colonel felt convinced that it was not an hallucination, for he had strong reason to believe that Tryon had come into the neighborhood recently, by stealth. His house had been closed for some time, and his whereabouts were unknown, but a straw or two indicated his harboring in the vicinity.

"By the way, Havard," remarked the colonel, "I

guess you remember our little talk about the stores at Hammer Hollow. I got them off the other day so nicely that not even Tryon could have smelled a mouse. Not a soul but the picked men I took with me was about, and nobody could guess where the wagons were loaded. You wouldn't have known me, I'm sure. If ever we need a secret place for stores again we can use the quiet old Hollow."

Cautioning Havard not to mention his presence to anyone, the colonel bade the two gentlemen good-night, and they proceeded to the house, where, after an examination, the physician administered some medicine, which in another half hour brought relief to his patient. Then, refusing the escort which Havard tendered, he returned to his quarters to seek a little rest ere the incessant duties of the hospital again drew upon his energies.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### A HORSE WORTHY OF A KINGDOM

As Mrs. Knox was decidedly better in the morning, Havard determined to ride over to Abijah Bartram's, near Newtown Square, stopping by the way at a picket post commanded by Captain Harry Lee, about a mile south of Peggy's corner, established in the substantial stone house of John Scott. Soon Saladin and his master were threading their way thither. When within a half mile of the post Havard was halted by a sentinel stationed under a gigantic oak at the foot of a hill. But soon he was in the presence of the captain of light horse.

The civilian's fidelity to the Continental cause had been so well attested by his service upon more than one critical occasion that Lee did not hesitate to inform him of his own latest military performances. He had been engaged in cutting off British foraging parties, and had been quite successful in securing army supplies that had cost the redcoats considerable pains to gather together. This was a serious disadvantage to Howe, and the captain remarked humorously that "he supposed the British would be in his wool one of these days," as a checkmate to his annoying interference. His force at present was very small, and he had dispatched the quartermaster and several men to collect forage, which was not

easy to procure in a country that was necessarily despoiled by both the contending armies. The quartermaster's detachment had gone down toward Newtown, which was believed to be freed from the impressments of Howe. "But," observed Captain Lee, "you know, Mr. Brown, we must always be upon the lookout for the enemy, who may pounce upon us before we are aware of his nearness."

Captain Lee invited Havard to share a soldier's fare with him, intimating that it would not be luxurious, but his visitor declined the hospitality, declaring that he must push on toward Newtown. Suiting the action to the word, he bade the young officer good-bye, and in a few minutes had made a circuit of the knob to the west of the house, and faced again to the south.

At the "Square" Havard naturally let his eye rest upon the public house known as "Pratt's," where travelers found entertainment. It had been the home, for several of his childhood years, of a young man named Benjamin West, who, it was intimated in the news received from England, was gaining high reputation as an artist; and there was a current tradition that in that house his mother found him one day, when but seven years old, painting a very tolerable likeness of the baby of the household, with a brush made from "Tabby's" tail.

Havard thought less about the tavern and the brick house diagonally opposite, which had also been West's home for a while, than about some incidents in the career of James Fitzpatrick, a Tory outlaw, suggested by the inn.

This native Chester County brigand, after entering the Continental service, deserted, but, being apprehended, reënlisted, only however, to desert again. For a while he pursued his trade of a smith, but upon the advance of Howe's army acted as a guide. Then he made private war upon rich Whigs, and often secured large sums of money, which he hid in various haunts. In a gloomy cavern at Castle Rock, two miles west of Newtown, a vast mass of enstatite, crowning a hilltop in the woods, "Captain Fitz" was suspected of having a den, wherein part of his ill-gotten gains was secreted; and there were similar caves along the Brandywine, and in the Chester Valley, where he found convenient refuge when the pursuit of sheriffs and constables became warm.

One of the latest exploits of this disturber of the public peace was his appearance at the "Pratt House," at the very time of the assemblage of a large number of farmers with a view to his apprehension, and his masterly daunting of the entire company while he coolly drank at the tavern bar and departed without molestation.

Havard stopped for a moment at the tavern corner to exchange a few words with the hostler, who paid much attention to Saladin. Havard noticed that his glances restlessly fell upon some distant point, as though he were expecting an arrival. It was a little difficult to get away from the inquisitive fellow, who would have had Havard in to drink; but the young man said, "Good-day" politely, and passed on to Abijah Bartram's.



He was, however, doomed to disappointment, for Deborah Bartram informed him that her husband was absent in Birmingham, and would not return until late. She invited him to remain, at least to dinner, but with appreciative excuses Havard turned homeward. Once more he passed Pratt's, and again he saw the hostler still strangely scanning the country. Not halting on this occasion, Havard leisurely ascended the long easy grade to the north. From this watershed he next descended into a hollow thickly wooded, where he found Lee's quartermaster and his squad of foragers. They lounged carelessly upon the gray, turfy banks at the side of the road while eating a luncheon. They were hospitable enough to invite the traveler to partake of their fare, but Havard declined, stopping, however, to converse with them. Probably he lingered ten or fifteen minutes in their company, meanwhile dismounting. Then, springing on his horse, he ascended to the next hilltop. Why he looked back he could not explain to himself; but just when on its brow he turned and glanced at the group, only to discover an astounding transformation. The road was literally full of redcoats, mounted, and brandishing sabers that flashed in the sun! The surprised foragers had sprung to their feet, and were endeavoring to gain their horses, but in an instant they were surrounded and captured.

Havard trembled with excitement, not knowing what to do. In another moment he thought of the post at Scott's, and recollected Captain Lee's remark about an attack. The dragoons were making with

hot haste for the place he occupied. The road fairly swarmed with them! It might not do him much harm to meet them, perhaps none; yet he preferred their room to their company. And clearly Lee was in peril. He recollected how small a force the captain had, and while no doubt he would be on the alert, yet disaster might overtake him if this large body were permitted to surprise him. A noble resolve took possession of him, that thrilled him until his brain seemed on fire. He would carry the news to Lee! But what if he were seen and pursued? A queer sensation affected him, but his soul swelled within him. He looked down at Saladin, and lovingly patted his neck, and stroked the fine flowing mane. He knew more than anyone else the powers of his splendid horse, and was not afraid to pit him against the best-blooded mount of any of the British officers. But then they might shoot, and kill the equine beauty he valued so highly. He did not think of himself until Ethel and his mother, and their dependence upon him, came to his vision.

Havard tarried but to observe that the dragoons were coming up the hill at full speed, a sufficient guard being left for the foragers, and then, speaking to Saladin as if the noble animal could comprehend human speech, he started for the post. But he had seen that a short, thickset man, probably as young as himself, led the advance with impetuosity.

It was not his purpose to rush down the hill toward the north unless his pursuers should follow at breakneck speed. But to his dismay he observed to his right, coming over a crossroad from Saint

David's and Cabbagetown, another company of red-coats. At their head rode a subaltern, and at his side a civilian, who seemed to possess an air of leadership superior to that of the officer.

Afterward Havard learned from a prisoner who was one of the participants the history of the maneuver. The civilian was the celebrated "Captain Fitz," the youthful commander of the dragoons, the notorious Banastre Tarleton, once an English lawyer, but now commencing his unenviable American military career. Fitzpatrick and the hostler at Pratt's were chums, unknown to the community. The latter kept the bandit informed of all opportunities to plunder, which were disclosed by garrulous frequenters of the barroom, and had furnished information of the weakness of Lee's force that led Tarleton to the attack. He was anxiously awaiting the latter's appearance when Havard halted on his way to Bartram's, and his personal cupidity was aroused at the sight of Saladin. It was his object to detain Havard until he should be entrapped, when his outlaw chief would probably secure the animal. It was therefore with a definite object that Tarleton pressed up the hill, and his subaltern undertook to cut off escape by his flank movement.

So Havard was obliged to give Saladin rein. It was what the faithful steed had been waiting for. His intelligence was a byword among Havard's neighbors, and to-day instinct taught him that there was something at fault. His gentle dark eyes glimpsed the strange chargers speeding along the crossroad; his sharp ears heard the galloping hoofs

behind him; his delicate nostrils, expanding in blooded play, snuffed the strangers swarming on the highway. Havard was not afraid of his pursuers, but he was uneasy about the other party. There was no time to estimate the relative distances to be traversed to the meeting of the roads, and Havard could see that the civilian was well mounted.

Saladin was pacing magnificently. How those clean limbs kept up their marvelous movement! It might have been supposed that the black horse had a soul like his master, and that it was thrilled with the crisis of the occasion. Tarleton wavered between anger and admiration as he saw the fleeing steed slip easily away from him, despite all his urging of a courser of which he was proud. His fiery oaths were now of vexation, and anon of delight, as he saw the long streaming tail or caught a flutter of the glossy mane.

But the subaltern and Fitzpatrick were edging up to the crossroads, the latter on the lead. Would Saladin reach it before them? His pace was already a surprise to the subaltern's party, and Havard was not sure afterward but that it would have carried him through safely; but he could not afford to take any risks with the fate of the post in his hands, so, leaning close to the neck of his dumb comrade, he whispered a certain word. Then did Saladin put forth his fabulous powers. Captain Fitz and the subaltern were using their spurs, but Havard disdained to touch his gallant horse, as though, having never laid the whip upon him, it would be an indignity to do so now.

What was that dark streak passing the junction, that flight of a great arrow, that whisk of the wind? The subaltern and his companion, considerably ahead of their followers, were amazed to find themselves minus their prey, and could scarcely credit the fact that Havard had escaped them. But, baffled and disappointed as they were, Captain Fitz could scarcely restrain himself from throwing his hat in the air and hurrahing for the finest equestrian effort he had ever witnessed.

But the dragoons hesitated not, pressing on in eager pursuit, the plan of action having been communicated to the subaltern, who merely glanced back at Tarleton for his nod to go ahead. A well-directed shot might have killed or maimed Saladin, but it would have aroused the post now comparatively near at hand. Havard groaned at the thought that Saladin might be ruined by this ride, yet duty—a favorite beacon with him—shone clearly. Nevertheless he gently checked the flying animal to his former steady, even pace. Up the next grade he quickly flew, down again to the hollow where a brook crossed the road, up another grade, and then—victory! victory!—around the corner in the shadow of the big knoll, just a few rods more to the gate of the stable yard. Already Lee had heard the sound of hurried hoof-beats, and was looking out of a window; instantly he recognized the rider, and understood Havard's warning shout, "The dragoons!" Quickly he ordered the sentry to admit Havard; quite as rapidly the latter threw himself from his horse and opened a stable door, closing it

hysterically when Saladin was safely within it, and drawing the heavy bolt. Then he would have sunk to the floor of the stall with the fatigue of excitement but for the battle storm that almost immediately enveloped the premises.

Lee had sharply commanded the barricading of the doors and lower windows of his impromptu fortress, and this was barely effected when Tarleton swept up with his two hundred picked men and cut the sentry to pieces. But it was too late to surprise the garrison.

At first Havard gave his entire attention to his horse. There seemed but a slim chance of saving either himself or it. But, whatever was to be the upshot, he would preserve Saladin from taking cold. With bunches of straw he rubbed his shining coat, which was wet with perspiration, until it was dry, when he carefully blanketed him with a horse cover belonging to Mr. Scott.

Only then did he try to discover how the battle was progressing. He scarcely expected that Lee's small garrison could repel so large a body of trained soldiers. Lee's report to Washington, rendered a few days afterward, embodied the fact that he had not a soldier for each window!

Havard had no conception of the safety of his temporary quarters until he climbed into the mow and surveyed the exciting scene through a ventilator.

The dragoons evidently had bullets to spare; for these pattered incessantly against the doors, lintels, window frames, and stone walls, but most of them wide of the mark. The devoted little band within

had no ammunition to waste, and every shot of theirs told; but now, alas! two of them were wounded, one mortally.

Tarleton became anxious. He knew it would not do to linger, for a detachment from the American encampment might fall upon him, surprising him in turn. He had already fruitlessly lost several of his men. As a *dernier ressort* he led an assaulting party. But Lee was ready, and the young cavalry commander narrowly escaped death. The dragoons now turned their attention to the stable, but the guard enfiladed the attack in that direction, and it failed.

Havard heard shouting! He ascended to a point on the east gable, and saw a subaltern of Lee's company waving his flag out of a north window of the house, and calling as if to soldiers at some distance. It was only a *ruse de guerre*, but the dragoons were afraid of Continental reinforcements, and their firing did not disconcert the young officer, who only cried the louder.

Tarleton perceived that his men could not be rallied again to close quarters with the garrison. Perhaps a window or door might yet be carried, but the men had lost spirit. So, in some disorganization, having marched up the hill, King George's men marched down again, leaving a dozen bodies to be buried by the foe in the little Welsh graveyard at the corner, and several wounded besides.

When the coast was perfectly clear Havard emerged from his shelter, not without some timidity. But he found that the enemy had really vanished,

and this was confirmed later by the appearance of the foragers, who had managed to escape while the dragoons in their vexation stopped to wreak vengeance on a farmhouse.

Lee was profuse in his expressions of gratitude to Havard, and applauded him and his faithful steed without stint. The latter, well baited, carried his master swiftly home, ere nightfall, without further incident, and in his comfortable stall quite as speedily forgot his high honors.



## CHAPTER XIX

### LOVE'S LABOR FOUND

THE indisposition of Mrs. Knox proved to be only temporary, but Ethel's assiduous attention to her for a few days, including loss of sleep, resulted in such weariness that Havard considerably proposed an outing. The offer was appreciated, especially as the weather for the latter part of February was genial, the sun tempering the coldness of the air and causing it to be invigorating to the lungs. Havard had purchased another horse, and his plan embraced a ride up to the "Massacre" ground, from which the principal tokens of the night struggle had been removed. He had at first shrunk from seeing the bloody field, whose incidents were repugnant to him; but latterly he had come to entertain a desire to understand the tactics practised by the British.

It was a time of the ebb of unpleasant feelings with Havard, and his old feeling of pride in the beauty of his wife possessed him strongly as he rode at her side, and studied her graceful form and the æsthetic mold of nose and lip and cheek. He still suffered mental uneasiness at times, while debating the curious questions that would experience a resurrection, do what he might; but to-day found him admiring his bride as much as ever. Havard was profoundly perplexed, for beneath all his difficulties lay the greater mystery of himself.

However, for the moment he dismissed disagreeable obtrusions, and called Ethel's attention to the winter charms of the vale in which they rode. Halting upon a little elevation near his cousin's, he bade her look back at the purple hills embossed in white and the snowy gates of the gap glistening in the sunbeams. Then he guided her eye up along the North Hill, from Mount Misery westward, and across the valley to the South Hill. Up the Swedes' Ford road they trotted, occasionally breaking into a canter, past the Presbyterian church, and out to the Long Ford road, where they turned to the left, and briskly passed the "Admiral Warren." The ascent of the ravine to the high ground on the south was soon accomplished, and in a few minutes more their willing horses placed them on the spot where Wayne's command was assailed at midnight in the previous September. As the snow completely covered the ground the floor of the woods was not visible, yet there remained traces of an encampment; and many of the trees bore evidence of musketry fire in the shape of bullet holes, while occasionally scarred bark was eloquent of the energetic use of the bayonet, or sword, in the hand-to-hand conflict.

A brief stay was quite sufficient, for the memories of the place were harrowing to both and sickening to Ethel. Two miles to the eastward stood the residence of the Waynes, and Havard proposed a call there, where he was fairly acquainted owing to some transactions with General Wayne in *ante bellum* days.

The visit was quite agreeable to Ethel, who was

charmed with the grace of her hostess. The mansion itself, which was one of the finest of country residences, two and a half stories high, fronted to the south; and the view in this direction from the parlor, though slightly obstructed by woodland, was pleasing. Mrs. Wayne showed her guests the surveying instruments used by the general, and entertained them with merry narratives of his courtship.

As the general was believed to be at headquarters that day—he was frequently absent to secure supplies for the army—and as Havard had mentioned his purpose to visit the Walkers, with whom the general had his official home, Mrs. Wayne took advantage of the opportunity to send him a personal message.

Riding out to the Lancaster road, and down past the "Blue Ball Inn," they presently came to Peggy's corner; and immediately Havard thought of that September day when he rode through the hamlet and caught up with Frances Jones on her homeward way from the store. What a flood of memories it evoked! Ethel wondered why he was so suddenly silent and absorbed in thought, but made no remark; and thus they rode onward, until they came to the Church road crossing northward to the valley.

When they passed the Baptist meeting-house they saw a figure in the graveyard opposite which Havard recognized as that of its former pastor, Chaplain Jones, who came forward to greet the travelers. Havard had heard much of his patriotism and devotion to the sick soldiers. In addition to his spiritual ministrations, his practical acquaintance with minor

surgery was such as to make him eminently serviceable in physical respects. Capital at dressing a wound, or at an amputation, he was also possessed of strategic skill in reconnoissances, and often risked his life in them. When he learned from Havard that he and Ethel had just visited the "Paoli" field, he narrated the events of that fearful night with such vivid eloquence, albeit with perfect naturalness, that Ethel's flesh fairly crept. He had barely escaped with his life. Although in an entirely different vein, his account of life in the camp, and especially in the hospitals, was deeply interesting. He spoke of having visited that morning the hospital established in the Valley Friends' meeting-house, of the sufferings of the soldiers, and the scarcity of suitable provisions for the sick. It was not needful for Havard to remark that dainties were very scarce with the majority of the people, for the fact was well known. Mrs. Brown had supplied the hospitals as generously as her slender resources would permit, and was grieved at her inability to do more. The presence of the British after Brandywine had been like the invasion of the Egyptian locusts that ate up every green thing.

The chaplain rode with his newly met friends to Wayne's headquarters, and as they passed through a lane extending from the Swedes' Ford road to the rear of the property called their attention to the fine springs gushing from beneath a bank to the right. They added materially to the little stream that supplied power for the mill near by, which was run to its utmost capacity to grind grain for the

army, and about their margin were beds of water-cress so green and crisp that the chaplain determined to secure a bunch of it for some of his wards.

The worthy parson knew what trivial circumstances of war were sometimes interesting to civilians, and asked Ethel if she had seen the bullet hole in the staircase of Jacob Walker's house—meanwhile pointing in that direction. Upon her confessing that she had not even heard of it he advised her to ride around that way and view it. It was the work of a Hessian who pretended that rebels were concealed in the building. It was now General Potter's headquarters, while General Poor occupied the house of Benjamin Jones.

Soon they were at Joseph Walker's door, and in a few moments more were admitted to the presence of General Wayne. The energetic young brigadier was attended by his staff, Colonel Robinson, Majors Fishbourne and Ryan, and Dr. Blackwell.

The huge fireplaces of the reception rooms were blazing with logs that had been dragged into the house by a horse. Afterward Ethel was taken down to see the heavy arched foundations of the chimneys. The "Hessian closet," a cupboard in the hall, embedded in the solid wall, large enough to hold several persons who could stand upright in it, proved a curio.

While the general was still extending courtesies to his callers two more were announced. These proved to be Baron De Kalb and General Daniel Morgan. The former was considerably past middle life,

although usually taken to be twenty years younger, the reflection of his abstemious habits; the latter was about forty, and had recently returned from the north, where Lafayette's request for a coadjutor had sent him. The scheme concocted by Gates and Conway to get the young marquis away from Washington by pretending to send him upon a Canadian expedition had collapsed, and the two stalwart supporters of the commander-in-chief were once more at his side.

To the joy of all sincere patriots the conspiracy against Washington known as the "Conway Cabal" was fast melting into air; and the edge tools at first handled with such skill by the ambitious schemers were beginning to severely wound their own hands. The general's efforts with Congress for the betterment of the army were making substantial progress. His representations that some part of his troops were deprived of meat for an entire week, and that the other part did not receive it oftener than once in three or four days, finally awoke the sluggish legislators to the performance of their functions. The committee appointed to investigate the difficulty reported the distress and misery of the soldiers, and inspired measures to alleviate it.

The Baron De Kalb acknowledged the presence of Mrs. Havard Brown with the grace characteristic of that amiable foreigner. Tall and erect, swarthy of countenance, with dark blue eyes and finely shaped gray head, he exercised authority over his men so kindly that they blessed the day when he became the successor of General Weedon. Abijah

Stephens, in whose house he resided for several months, was fond of telling of the simplicity and urbanity of this excellent soldier. General Morgan, in command of the outposts and moving about continually, but part of the time a resident of John Moore's house, was a tall, muscular man celebrated for his skill with nature's weapons as well as with the rifle. He had done great work at Saratoga, but was practically ignored by Gates in his reports of that battle.

The afternoon was wearing away, and—perhaps it was the mental excitement of the day, or quite as likely the rather extended ride she had taken—a feeling of languor had taken possession of Ethel, coupled with general discomfort. Her head ached, and she suggested to Havard that they proceed homeward. Paying their parting respects to General Wayne and his company of officers, the pair were soon in the saddle, and twenty minutes of easy riding brought them to the familiar horse block in front of their home.

In the morning it seemed certain that a spell of sickness was impending. Ethel's skin was hot and dry, and the unfavorable sensations of the previous day continued, perhaps even more marked in intensity. Havard exhausted his medical knowledge in examining his wife's tongue, which he found heavily furred, and in feeling her pulse, which was much quickened.

Ethel still refused to see a doctor, but Havard exclaimed that if she were no better on the morrow he would bring one without her permission. She

seemed dull and heavy during the entire day, and to gratify her mother-in-law drank freely of a "panacea." It was hot and strong, and, in spite of the wry aspect her face assumed when she swallowed it, it appeared to soothe her into slumber. The next morning she felt somewhat relieved, but a scarlet rash had made its appearance, and when Mrs. Brown saw it she dispatched Havard for the doctor. The nearest physician at the time was Dr. Potts, who, though his time was usually completely absorbed by his army duties, might be willing for acquaintance' sake to examine Ethel and prescribe treatment. So Havard went over to the hospital, and fortunately found the doctor-general, who willingly agreed to accompany Havard to his home, "and breathe a little fresh air"; but his merry, jesting manner changed when he saw the patient. A very slight examination confirmed his suspicions, and he prepared the medicines which he judged it best to prescribe.

His stay was brief, nor was he communicative until he left the room; and then, turning to Mrs. Brown, who had followed him, he pronounced the disease smallpox. It was a realization of her fears, but the intelligence was very sore. Still she ventured the inquiry, "May it not be scarlet fever, Doctor?"

"No," said he very firmly, "I have had too many cases to be mistaken. There have been hundreds of them over there"—pointing to the camp grounds. "I have been afraid of a general outbreak in the neighborhood, but it has not come yet. We must keep this case well isolated, and you must do your



best to prevent it from spreading. However, keep cool, don't be afraid of it, and perhaps we can confine the miserable disease to Mrs. Havard."

It was his way of referring to Ethel. The doctor's eyes twinkled as though it were but a trifling thing, annoying, to be sure, but not worth worrying about.

Mrs. Brown was uneasy about the matter of medical attendance, for she feared that the doctor would not be able to give Ethel attention. When she expressed her anxiety, the doctor smiled, and said, "I shall stand by you, Mrs. Brown, you may be sure. You will really not need me very often, if you will keep the directions, as I am sure you will. But I will come over each day, if possible, and oftener if any complication should arise. I am afraid that I am to blame for this case, by my coming to the house to attend to Mrs. Knox, and since I have gotten you into the scrape I must get you out of it!" Havard, sorely stricken, heard this announcement gratefully.

Besides concern for Ethel's recovery there were other matters to be considered. The use of the house by General Knox was now peculiarly embarrassing. The Browns scarcely knew where to turn. However, it was temporarily agreed that Havard alone should wait upon his wife, unless there should be grave developments, and also give attention to the stock, while his mother would preside as usual in household affairs.

Pains were taken to isolate the room in which Ethel lay, and exactness in carrying out the direc-

tions of Dr. Potts was observed. Certain additional prescriptions suited to the case had been dispatched by the kind physician.

The fever, which had at first promised to abate, increased, and the alarm of both Havard and his mother grew with it. The young husband was now suffering intensely, for his natural tenderness came into perfect play, and he bent over his wife in the deepest solicitude. The doctor observed his intelligent handling of the patient, and commended him, rallying him with the inquiry whether he could not be induced to take an assistant surgeon's position in the army. "The boys," he laughingly declared, "would cry out for you if they knew of you."

But the doctor saw that Ethel was gravely ill. He had a fashion of indulging in fun at the most critical moments, and, though very few knew it, the more amusing and unconcerned he seemed to be, the gloomier was the outlook. But this choice spirit was not only thinking of cheering the spirits of his patients in the hour of peril; he whistled to keep up his own courage when perplexed with deep-seated disease.

The doctor did not say so, but he expected Ethel to become delirious, and so it eventuated. Havard, strong and brave and tender, had his hands full. His spirit was tried, and the strain upon soul and body was fast becoming greater than he could bear. Help was out of the question, for the scourge was dreaded by the most humane.

It was the evening of the fifth day, and the fever continued. After a hard afternoon Havard had

come downstairs for a mouthful of fresh air. While his mother relieved him at Ethel's bedside he put on his hat and greatcoat and walked out into the yard. It was a clear, cool night, not intensely cold, but bracing and invigorating. The trees around the house would have shut it in but for the fact that they were leafless, and Havard looked up at the glimmering company of the sky with the feeling that he would like to call them to his aid. He could see Sirius shining in the southeast, and above it the bright but inferior Procyon. In the south Orion blazed conspicuously.

He leaned upon the gate that opened into the road, and pondered upon the strange events that had come to pass in the last few months. He dreamed of his work on the farm, the jingling music of the plow and harrow and the farm wagon, the songs of the birds in the undisturbed freedom of the field, the lazy movements of the cattle and the gambols of the calves. He thought of the forge and the mill, of the familiar nooks in the valley, the tall hills, the sparkling streams flowing through the green meadows, the friends of childhood and of later years. He saw the panorama repeating itself, and awaited with some dread the remaining unfolding. He thought of the first time he had met Ethel, of the renewal of acquaintanceship at Saint Peter's, of the growth of affection, of his marriage; and inevitably his thoughts would tend to his own questionings of himself. And, whether he would or would not, in all his troubled visions the image of Frances Jones, child, maiden, woman, arose to his

gaze as the moon's reflection riding on the waves of a restless sea shines in the eyes of one who looks over the ship's rail into the billowy deep.

How long he would have continued to linger, lost in thought, cannot be surmised; but the figure of a woman bearing a bundle suddenly appeared before him. If he was at first startled at the apparition, his brain subsequently reeled for a moment with absolute surprise when he saw who it was that approached him. It was almost a gasp with which he stammered the single word "Frances!"

She, too, was startled, at seeing Havard by the gate, for she did not perceive him until he spoke. But it was only a momentary and perfectly natural surprise on her part, and the feeling immediately subsided. But not so with Havard. He could scarcely command himself to speak. The impulse was strong to invite Frances into the house at once, but he recollected the horrible nightmare, and immediately cried out, "O, Frances, I cannot ask you to come in. Ethel—my—my—wife—is sick with a dangerous disease, and you must not come near us."

It was with a wrench that he said it, for it gave him infinite pain. Even in the confusion of the moment, the inexplicable something that radiated from Frances Jones made itself recognized, and her voice breathed a calm like that of the skies he had just been scanning.

But Frances, now perfectly self-possessed, said in that soft tone that through the years had always proved a species of music in his ears, "Havard, I

know it, and I've come to help you nurse"—here she faltered, being about to say "Mrs. Brown," but she at once controlled herself and said—"your wife."

Havard was great enough to argue the case with her. What he answered at first, in his deep bewilderment and gratitude he could never recall, but it was grateful to Frances. But he could have suffered any hardship rather than permit Frances to run the risk. That he actually craved her ministry in the hour of danger he did not conceal from himself, but he felt that duty required him to reject such reckless unselfishness. But Frances proved the stronger in argument, told him that her determination was deliberate, and that Freeman, the farm boy, had brought her over prepared to stay until the danger was past.

What was there then to do but to escort her to the house? However, before reaching it Frances hastened to say the only thing that required an effort. She said it very lightly, but it cost her heavily, and she was thankful to escape the beams of the candle. It was an apology for not having called on Mrs. Brown—she used that term this time—to wish her happiness, and bid her welcome to her new home.

The words perforated the already sore heart of Havard like a needle; but before he could frame any response Frances relieved him of embarrassment by continuing: "With God's help, Havard, we'll bring her yet to a condition of health where those wishes shall be fulfilled." And the grief-stricken man at her side felt that she had been carrying his burdens

all unknown to him, and successfully transferring the heaviest to the Everlasting arms.

As they entered the house they met Mrs. Brown, who had just stepped downstairs for a minute, leaving Ethel asleep. She recoiled at the danger to Frances, whom she loved next to Havard himself, and was amazed at her son's carelessness in permitting her to come into the house; but in an instant she divined the true state of affairs, and in a flood of tears clasped the girl to her bosom, while Havard, no longer able to contain himself, slipped out of the house. Frances was too affected by the warmth of her reception to utter any words, but she playfully swung her bundle about as a token of her purpose in coming. "Just like the men," Mrs. Brown found voice to say, in an attempt to dispose of the agitation humorously, "they are always blundering. To think that Havard didn't carry it in!"

## CHAPTER XX

### A VALLEY OF HUMILIATION

THE advent of Frances Jones breathed a new atmosphere into the home of the Browns. From that very moment hope glimmered in the hearts of Havard and his mother. Even the sick Ethel noticed a change in her surroundings, and when she opened her eyes half inquiringly at the fresh, sweet face that bent lovingly over her she seemed to appeal for more of the grateful touches of her new nurse's hand. The mysterious and loathsome disease triumphed in pursuing its natural course, but relief was afforded the sorely tried patient, while Frances anticipated her wants by a ready interpretation, and poured out such attentions as brought a flush of gladness to her cheeks.

It was a unique experience for Havard; often he doubted its reality, and designated it an illusion. Yet the facts were daily before him, and he helplessly floated along with the current of fate. Ethel looked so different in many other respects than that of the tint and disfigurement of her skin that she seemed quite another person. Her luxuriant hair was cut close, and the contour of her face had changed. Her eyes were unnaturally bright, and looked out of deep hollows. But Havard thought of her with vastly more devotion than he might have

deemed possible after being racked with morbid doubts and fears for several weeks. Very tenderly he performed the numberless little services that eased her body or gratified her mind.

Frances was a wonder to him. He was still dazed to think of her amazing self-sacrifice—for his sake as he could not but feel. Doubtless she would have nobly offered her services to any neighbor, but he felt that personality also entered into the transaction—the personality of old time friendship—and it both solaced and grieved him. It was pleasant to think that her regard for her childhood playmate still existed; it was humiliating to receive so great a favor when he had turned away from her for another.

There was a gleam of womanliness in one of Frances's ministries that both amused and delighted Havard. When the inclination to find relief from the itching sensation connected with the development of the pustules became overmastering, and Ethel would have sacrificed her future facial charms to appease it by scratching, Frances, appreciating the imperiled beauty of her ward, continually anointed her skin with the oil of olives—so successfully that when the disease reached its omega none could surmise that she had ever been a sufferer with the most dreaded of all contagions.

The shadow which had rested so long upon the household was slow in dispelling. All were devoutly grateful to the Higher Power that it did not enlarge, and that Ethel remained the only sufferer. Frances would have returned home as soon as convalescence



seemed well established, but that was strongly vetoed by the Browns. Ethel regarded her as an angel, Havard's heart echoed the estimate, and his mother's affectionate feeling toward her was intensified a hundredfold, if that were possible. Their expostulations were effective, and Frances remained until it appeared reasonable to believe that the work of disinfection was thoroughly accomplished, and that she might return without risk to her own family.

The thirtieth of April arrived, and since the day was in every respect propitious Frances was escorted to her home, her mother having insisted upon her return by that time, unless prevented by storm. The mildness of spring was upon the land, the vivid green of the carpet of the Valley being matched by the delicate tint of the forward foliage, while the air was sweet with balmy odors.

It was thought best not to permit Ethel to undergo the fatigue of the ride to the Jones's, and so it fell to Havard's lot to ride at Frances's side as in the olden days. Mrs. Brown fancied that the circumstance was a little trying to the girl, and that she exhibited some symptoms of awkwardness because of it. Havard was conscious that she was ill at ease, and the effect upon himself was not encouraging.

It was a loving farewell that Mrs. Brown and Ethel gave their departing guest; nor was it accomplished in a moment. Over the latter came so keen a sense of what she owed to Frances that she sobbed her words of gratitude, and clung to her feebly, as though unwilling to let her go. Frances, too,

was deeply affected, but attempted to rally the convalescent with compliments upon her appearance. Through her assiduous attention Ethel had escaped all permanent markings upon her face except a single small pit, so situated that Frances told her it would heighten her beauty in Havard's eyes, since it simulated a dimple. But this was venturing upon ground whereon her own heart was very sensitive, and she was really glad when Mrs. Brown folded her in her arms and wept as she said good-bye. It afforded her own overcharged feelings an escape.

Then by a common revulsion all smiled, affirming that it was not a farewell like that attached to a journey across the sea, for they were separated by but a mile or two, and that under other and brighter auspices they must often meet. Mrs. Brown promised to take Ethel over to visit Frances and the remainder of the folks as soon as it should be advisable; and so they parted.

The ladies of the house escorted Frances to the horse block and saw her mount, and then gayly waved their handkerchiefs as she rode away. Down the slope the equestrians went to the creek side, and wound around its curving elbow beneath the fringing chestnuts. The ride through the woods was inspiring, and when they emerged from them, and neared the home of Cousin Samuel Havard, they perceived the scent of early lilacs on the zephyrs that blew from the creek.

Both Frances and Havard were shy. It was scarcely possible to suggest any theme upon which they could be perfectly unconcerned, unless, indeed,

it was the trite one of the war, and Havard accordingly called attention to the prospects of the army, taking his cue from a squad of soldiers they met. But that led to a reference to Howe's use of the Jones homestead, which in its turn recalled the last time they had been out together.

It was decidedly trying to the young man, and yet if he had so much as grazed the latch of the gate of recollections he would have found it an immeasurable relief to say all that was in his heart. He was tempted to try to explain what his conscience told him needed explanation; but in spite of the strength of his emotions, now much quickened by Frances's presence and a flood of memories, he refrained, for reason and a sense of justice in another direction providentially intervened.

As they emerged upon the Swedes' Ford road, and were about turning toward Frances's, they met Jennie Reese's father riding up from the river. He had a mournful tale to tell after the usual greetings of the day had been exchanged.

"They buried an officer at the Valley meeting-house this morning," said Mr. Reese; "he was mortally wounded in a duel, and died very soon afterward."

Both Frances and Havard expressed horror at the fact, and were naturally anxious to know its occasion.

"Couldn't learn any particulars," said Abel Reese; "it was Lieutenant-Colonel Green, and the man who shot him was Lieutenant White. Green was from down East somewhere, and the other from the

South. I was just coming up from the ford, and when I reached the meetinghouse lane I heard drums beating slow and muffled like, and saw a procession about the graveyard. So I went up, and found that they had wrapped the dead officer in a blanket they got from Mary Pugh, because they couldn't get a sheet. They buried him near Captain Speer—you recollect how they put him away in February, when there were so many officers there."

Havard spoke of the excessive loss of Continental officers, and referred to the recent burial, in Maurice Stephens's field, of Commissary John Waterman and the marking of his grave with two common red stones bearing his initials—something new in the history of the encampment.

Mr. Reese passed up the Swedes' Ford road, while Frances and Havard turned off at the corner. Soon they met Aunt Lydia Jones, who teasingly called out, "Looks like old times to see you together again. How's Mrs. Brown, Havard?"

The reference was rather a home thrust, alike unwelcome to both; but the inquiry afforded a loophole of escape, and Havard was happy to answer that his wife was almost well again.

"Glad to hear it," cheerily said the sociable housekeeper. "Saladin's in good spirits to-day. Wasn't it wonderful you got him back again after the red-coats stole him?"

After more chat they rode on to Frances's home, and in the spacious yard in front of the log barn Havard helped Frances from her saddle, and after tying the horses accompanied her to the house. But

Mrs. Jones had noticed their approach, and, hastening to the gate, met them, when, after familiarly addressing Havard, she nearly smothered her girl with embraces.

Then, turning to the young man again, she said, "Come, Havard, you must put your horses in the stalls and stay to dinner. Here, Freeman," she called to the farm boy, "come and attend to Mr. Brown's horses."

That youth had been skulking in the background, perhaps afraid of encountering representatives from a house that had experienced the invasion of a fell disease; but he complied with the directions of his mistress, and relieved Havard. But the latter protested that he must return forthwith.

"Not a bit of it, Havard; your mother knows well enough that I will not let you go back until after dinner. I hoped your wife would be well enough to come with you. She's almost sound again, isn't she? I'm so glad she's been spared to you. I suppose your mother couldn't leave her all alone, to come with you. I'm real disappointed that neither of them has come. No, you must not go home; I've got a chicken ready, and you must taste some of my gravy."

Unfortunately, Mr. Jones was absent, but his place was supplied by another visitor, who knocked at the door when the family was about to be seated at the table. It was not a stranger, but the traveling merchant, laden with a stock of household indispensables. There were few houses on his regular route where Heinrich Kichenheim was not welcomed

to the best the house could afford. Perfectly honest in his dealings, and irreproachable in his social behavior, he was quite a convenience to those people who lived remote from the stores; and he always acknowledged the gift of food and lodging by the present of some trifling article in his pack, or a concession in the price of his wares.

Havard had not seen him since the episode of the burning of the Thomson house, and was glad to meet him again, and hear the tidings from the city.

The itinerant merchant was generously newsy. "De Pritish folks ish shtill taking it easy down dere," he said. "But dere is somedings on foot dat means much. De soldiers haf somehow heard dat Howe is to go home soon; and dey is sorry, for de next man may be a fighter and get dem into plenty of trouble. Dere is to be a grand party, soon, for de general; and it is exshpected dat it will beat any ding of de kind dat ever was before."

Havard wondered how the peddler got so much information, and why the British permitted him to wander so freely in their camp. He gave expression to this surprise, but Heinrich vouchsafed no explanation. Havard spoke of running off the stores at the Forge, and casually referred to Tryon. At mention of this man the peddler seemed considerably interested, and asked a number of questions, being apparently more intimate with the subject than Havard might have supposed. But he had nothing to communicate, apparently, for he was reticent about answering any of Havard's inquiries.

The dinner proceeded to the satisfaction of all,

Mrs. Jones expressing her regret that neither of the Mrs. Browns was present. "You must bring your wife and mother very soon, Havard," she insisted, "and spend the day with us. It will do your wife good; and your mother, I am sure, likes to spend a little while with her old crony."

Havard promised to bring them at the first favorable opportunity. He had already taken occasion to tell his hostess how deep was his obligation to Frances for her splendid service—that of a sister, he would have said, but the word choked him. And he felt that with the ice thus broken it would be very pleasant to have the old intimacy continue, even in its new dress.

Among the dishes was one of early radishes, and another of scullions. Mrs. Jones was proud of these crisp vegetables, and Havard said the chicken was perfect, and that the gravy was even better, which created a laugh. The dessert consisted of rhubarb pie, which Mrs. Jones recommended as heartily as she had done the relishes.

Havard felt that he ought not to remain long after dinner, because of Ethel's "donciness," and therefore begged to be excused soon after the conclusion of the meal. And the peddler, who had been contributing not a little zest to the repast, sometimes of a thoroughly humorous nature, waited only to display his stock in its most inviting aspect before departing in search of other patrons.

"De chicken ish goot enough for dat gormandizer, General Howe, hisself," he remarked, when he had disposed of a generous portion of it. "Dere general

would never disturb dere General Washington so long as he get such goot eatings." And when he tasted the pie he seemed to have found the third heavens of gastronomical delight. As though he were revealing a secret, he said to Mrs. Jones, "It ish always mealtime when I comes to you mit goots; perhapsh it seems strange, but I like to get mine eatings here mit you." But Mrs. Jones had been shrewd enough to have noticed that fact before.

Havard's good-byes were grateful, and he rode away leading the horse that had carried Frances. He felt that he had sustained an irreparable loss that day, and that the vacant saddle stood for much in his household and heart. But on the whole he felt better; his burden was lightened considerably, and the dainty cherry bells that dropped upon him whispered comfort.

Above all, the star of Duty shone in the empyrean, undimmed by the bright rays of the vernal sun. The winter of anxiety and mental perplexity was giving place at last to the genial influences of spring.

Consequently it was with a light step that Havard pressed the doorsill of his own home, and saluted both his wife and his mother with a kiss.

"I knew thee would not get home in time for dinner," said Mrs. Brown. "How is Mercy Jones?"

And Havard, in a refreshingly gay mood, told of the excellent dinner, upon which his mother remarked, "Ethel, thee and I shall have to be looking after our laurels." He also narrated the gossip of Philadelphia received from the peddler, and Ethel



was entertained at hearing from the long-lost merchant.

That peripatetic was making across the fields to the Reeses, well knowing that Miss Jennie would require some of his finery.

Mr. Samuel Jones came home before nightfall, and embraced his daughter with fond pride, although he had never given full consent to her service of love. But both he and his wife wore an anxious expression, that each perceived in the other, but of which nothing was said until privacy permitted the exchange of feeling and opinion; and then it was the father who suggested, "Frances does not look well."

"It may be that she is merely pale from long confinement in the sick room without exercise," answered Mrs. Jones; "but still I fear that something is wrong." And the mother's eyes filled with tears.

"Cheer up, wife," said the good man, "she has suffered a great strain, but we will make her go out and visit her friends and take long rides, and her color will change when she gets the sun."

But Mrs. Jones—for women are more intuitive than their husbands and brothers—had noticed something amiss throughout the winter, and, moreover, she was pretty sure she could put her finger on the cause; but being a wise woman, as one might expect Frances's mother to be, she remained mute.

Calm and steady as Frances was, her service had proved a great tension; and now that she was back again in her beloved home, in the shelter of the

South Valley Hill, and in the lee of Mount Airy, the brooklet flowing through the yard, the spring effervescing in its sandy bed, and the orchard sweet with its fresh blossoms, she was overcome with the restfulness of home; and that night in her own little room that looked out on the orchard, and beyond it to the southern ridge, she felt so weary that she scarcely noticed the fleeting constellations that lingered last of all of the winter host now fast sweeping away to the southwest, before she sank to rest.

That same night Ethel seemed very wakeful. Her restlessness was apparent to Havard, who could not discern its cause. She was unusually quiet, yet he fancied that she had something to communicate. Still he said nothing to evoke remark, being himself absorbed in busy thought. But after quite an interval she crept up to his side, lightly leaned her head upon his shoulder, and gently patted his cheek, while sobs shook her frame. Surprised at her action, Havard quickly gathered her into his arms, and, kissing the caressing hand, tenderly inquired the cause of her distress.

He always remembered the startling impression of her reply. It was some moments before Ethel could command herself sufficiently to pronounce the words, but between her sobs she finally managed to say: "Dear Havard, I am not worthy of you. I have never been to you what you deserve. Your love has been so rich, and mine so poor. How could you ever give me such affection, when I lack so much?"

Havard did his utmost to soothe her, but nothing that he could say availed. He presumed that weakness and nervelessness had induced lowness of spirits; but she responded to all his well-meant assurances that her expressions were not the impulse of the hour, but rather the deep-set convictions of the last few weeks.

"Dear Havard," she said, with a sweetness of tone he had never before observed in her conversation, and with a depth of affection that seemed entirely new, "only since I have known Frances Jones have I come to understand what I ought to be in character. God knows there is a great gap between mine and that of that lovely girl. I think, though, that she has taught me the secret of love. I often wonder, Havard," she proceeded, "why you never sought her for your wife, when you knew her so well. I know that she could have given you to the full the love that so noble a husband deserves."

There was such plaintiveness in Ethel's tones, such unselfish love and tenderness, that Havard was overcome. It was his turn to stroke a face he could not see, and press with manly strength a weak form to his bosom. His chin trembled, and his lips refused their office, while tears freely bathed his cheeks. The impulse to tell Ethel all his former musings was strong. It seemed to him that it was his duty to make a confession of all his thoughts. The paroxysm of grief his wife had exhibited, and above all her loving, self-abnegating words, had pierced his very soul, and made him appear mean

beyond all description. He loathed himself as he reflected upon his vacillations. Yet, was it wisest to reveal his shortcomings?

Condemned as Havard felt, he yet perceived that a confession of all his imaginings must only confer exquisite pain upon Ethel, and that while the relief he might secure to himself would be great it would be a species of selfishness to attain it at the expense of his wife. He could truthfully assure her of his deep affection, for he had never loved her so ardently before, even when he called her, in the bliss of his wedding day, his "very own."

Whatever philosophers and moralizers may say in criticism, Havard never regretted his disobedience to his first impulse; and in the evening time of life, when the shadows grew deep about him, he felt comforted to remember that he had only folded his wife closer, kissed away her accusations of herself, and overwhelmed her with love.

And he succeeded in his consolations. Expressions of relief fell from her lips, expressions of hope and joy, a sweet murmur of happiness and peace. It was a new Ethel that was born on that memorable night, a woman transformed by love.

Well aware that such excitement was perilous to the weak form that rested beside him, Havard strove to tranquilize Ethel, and induce her to resign herself to slumber. But it was long before she ceased to talk, and Havard never knew whether or not she was asleep when his own eyelids refused longer to be on guard; for when the morning broke she still lay with her cheek against his breast and her hand

resting upon his face, but both so cold that Havard started upon realizing the touch.

A nameless dread possessed him as he hurriedly examined the form that lay so still. It could not be, he thought, and yet it was—death! Lightly he touched the white brow with his lips; fondly he kissed those pale portals of speech that but a few hours previously had uttered such gracious words. But they were unresponsive, and in his agony Havard recognized that Ethel's heart had ceased to beat.

A piteous cry brought his mother into the room, and Havard's worst fears were confirmed. Mrs. Brown was shocked inexpressibly; for Ethel's sickness had rapidly matured motherly love, and the suddenness of the event bore heavily upon her. But it was the living that now seriously claimed the judicious woman's attention, and Havard became a boy again, while his mother comforted him as of old.

Dr. Potts said that the strain of illness had proved too much for a heart that was constitutionally weak, and that it had given way a little earlier, perhaps, by reason of some unusual stimulus, but that under the best of circumstances it was probable that Ethel would not have rallied.

Sacred grief is not exempt from the obtrusions of duty. Havard was compelled to think of the burial of his wife. Where should she be laid away? Why not at Saint Peter's? His thoughts ran upon their meeting in that churchyard—not for the first time, but on the day when love awoke in his heart. Yes,

it was fitting that she should be buried there. And his mother was wisely willing, although to her the Eagle or the Valley Friends' yard seemed more appropriate, since Havard, through herself, was partly of Quaker blood.

The preparations for a funeral at that early day were elaborate. Cousin Samuel Havard superintended the notification of the relatives and friends, sending Abel Reese up the Valley, and Balsam Ringer over to the northward, to "warn" the people in those sections, while he reserved to himself the more painful duty of acquainting Mr. and Mrs. Thomson with the sorrowful tidings, associating with it—tell it not in the modern Gath—the purchase of certain supplies for the larder!

But he took home from the grief-stricken mother a message that was mournfully grateful to Havard, to the effect that once, while speaking of burial places, Ethel had expressed a wish to be buried at Saint Peter's, its quiet graveyard, environed with hills and guarded by the Valley ridges, proving to her the most attractive of all the cemeteries she had visited.

There was no dearth of women helpers in the house of mourning. These kindly neighbors, utilizing the materials commonly found in abundance in well-to-do farmhouses, together with the groceries procured by Cousin Samuel, made extensive preparations for the entertainment of friends. Much of this was repugnant to the feelings of Mrs. Brown and her son, but both were particular to be hospitable, and they quietly submitted to custom. It was

not a light luncheon, but—publish it not in the streets of the modern Askelon—a full meal of roast and boiled meats, fowls, vegetables, relishes, pies, and custards, that was got ready against the funeral day; and every worker found her time fully absorbed in her self-imposed duties.

Sunday afternoon at two had been selected as the hour of service. By that time a large number of neighbors and friends, together with the relatives, were gathered at the Brown homestead, their horses being hitched to convenient posts or trees, while the men folk stood around the house and whittled bits of wood, and talked about crops and prospects, as was their wont. Yet there were unmistakable signs of appreciation of the suddenness and sadness of the event that had brought them together, and of hearty sympathy with a favorite neighbor. The tearfulness of the women and girls was eloquent of their interest and pity.

An unusual solemnity rested upon the gathering when Parson Currie began the burial service, the men outside coming close to the open doors and removing their hats. The rector read the familiar sentences with impressiveness and feeling. "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live!" sounded thrillingly in all ears, but especially so in the case of the nearest mourner. Lighthearted Jennie Reese and Rebecca Neilley were crying in a corner, and the eyes of their young companions were not dry. The psalm and the New Testament lesson were read with such reverence that they voiced the

aspirations of the bereaved hearts, and imparted a measure of consolation.

The brief discourse which followed was discriminating and practical. Far from attempting to comfort the mourning ones, the rector admitted the vanity of human endeavor in such a direction, and strove but to prepare the way for the divine ministry. He felt such a keen sense of Havard's sorrow that his clerical duty was flavored with personal affection, and laid his hearers under hearty obligations.

Then occurred the pathetic incident of the last parting. Serenely beautiful in death, Ethel's face fascinated all who surveyed it. The scene became a Bochim long enough before the parents looked upon their child in final farewell. Havard lingered last, craving each moment of view, and unwilling to give up his dead. But presently he yielded to the old-fashioned carpenter and undertaker, who stepped forward, laid the lid upon the coffin—a grim and forbidding ancient pattern unsoftened in its outlines—screwed it into place, and directed the pallbearers to transfer the sacred burden to the rude hearse. Following the family and the immediate relatives came the neighbors.

Travel being chiefly by horseback, the procession was a cavalcade, which moved with decorous slowness toward the Swedes' Ford road, and up that highway, in the face of a brilliant sun. Nature had not donned her mourning robes, but there were few in the large company who were not touched with the sadness of the journey.

The grass in the churchyard was already tall.



Bees were merrily humming about the tempting sweets that grew all unmindful of death in the sacred inclosure; and the birds in the tree tops sang as blithely as though to some who were present on that peaceful Sabbath afternoon the heavens were not darkened.

Friendly hands assisted the undertaker to lower the coffin into its narrow cell. Every hat was removed, while the rector read, "Man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live—" When he reached the sentences of the committal the sexton and gravedigger—an old man, who had known Havard's father when a boy—stooped and picked up some of the red, gravelly soil, and at the words, "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust!" dropped it softly upon the coffin. Then followed the prayer and benediction—and all was over, save the filling of the grave accompanied with the harrowing thud of clods and stones that fell upon the coffin lid.

There were subdued social greetings in the churchyard for ten or fifteen minutes, and then, in response to a well-understood custom, the majority of the friends returned to the house to "partake of refreshments." Incongruous as it certainly seems, the dismal loneliness of the hours immediately succeeding the interment was somewhat lessened by the diversion of a chatting company that talked of anything but death. Besides, the simple country folk cherished such pronounced views of hospitality, and were so rigid in their adherence to long-established usage that they would have been wounded

at the non-observance of this familiar feature of a funeral, and perhaps would have resented the fancied slight.

It was a sad, sad day for Havard; yet the bitterness was tempered with sweetness. His sorrow was deep, but it was mingled with the joy of his last recollections of Ethel. The interval since her death had not been unimproved, and clearer views of life had been vouchsafed him. He was learning to appreciate the commodities of the world at their true value—both the gold and the tinsel—and there had sprung up in his soul a confidence that henceforth he should walk in a diviner light.

Mrs. Brown proved very precious to her son in his darkest hours. Her presence and manner, even more than her words, which were few but judicious, strengthened and comforted him. Next to her perhaps he valued Mrs. Mercy Jones, who with her husband spoke consolatory words, and gently pressed his hand at parting. Frances was unable to attend the funeral, but Havard knew that her sympathetic heart did not lack in respect of pity.

Ethel's parents consented to remain a day or two in the bereaved home, and their presence was grateful to the Browns, dulling slightly the edge of their grief. But when they were gone an unutterable loneliness afflicted Havard, for the house seemed so vacant and quiet!

## CHAPTER XXI

### A MAY MEDLEY

THE miracle month opened in the Great Valley with one of its pristine transformation scenes. Blossoms garnished the orchards with their dainty fabrics, and exhaled a fragrance surpassing the trophies of the perfumer's art. The wan and wasted soldiers marshaled upon the summit of Mount Joy and its supporting hills took new courage and heart, and forgot the iciness of the past winter in the warm breath of Maia. From the four-petaled white blossoms of the dogwood of the forest to the snowy viburnums and swelling thyrses of the lilacs in good housewives' yards, that later burst into odorous bloom, forest and field and garden were arrayed in bridal costume, in anticipation of the coming of the sky groom, already tremulous with eagerness, though still measurably distant. But the crowning witchery was the exquisite shade of the vernal green!

The spirits of the patriotic people of the country were revived with the resurrected vigor of the season, and this was augmented by cheering news from over the sea. Franklin and his coadjutors had at last succeeded in negotiating a treaty with France, and henceforth the banners of the *fleur-de-lis* might be expected to wave in battle by the side of

the stars and stripes. It was as though the sun had suddenly shone out of heavy banks of mist, and the foggy envelope was vanishing with the quickness of magic. General Knox's eyes sparkled with pleasure as he informed Havard Brown one evening that he should hear a chorus next day from the deep bass voices of his dogs of war; and at nine in the morning the heroes of the hills paraded with an alacrity to which they had been strangers since the previous autumn. The brigade chaplains evinced unusual fire as they addressed their martial congregations, but Parson David Jones seemed inspired as he flamed upon his cherished theme of loyalty to liberty at the head of Wayne's Pennsylvania Line.

At ten a solitary gun in the Artillery Park sounded, and the entire army grounded arms after loading. An hour and a half later the signal was repeated, the soldiers marched to their alarm posts, and the modest, patient man, whose military fame was to grow side by side with that of his moral excellence and statesmanship, reviewed his faithful troops as they stood in two lines. From the extreme right of the front line he moved to its extreme left; then, ranging along the rear line from left to right, he stepped upon an elevation in the background and gave the signal for a *feu de joie*. Thirteen pieces of cannon thundered forth a salute to the treaty, and from right to left of the front line ran a fire of musketry, immediately followed by the similar fire of the rear line from left to the right; and then once more the metallic throats of Knox's command sounded in honor of French assistance. Then the

salute was repeated. After the return of the brigades to their encampments the day was given over to jollity and such feasting as the camp cuisine could afford, the general officers dining with Washington.

This was on the sixth of May. Two days later Sir Henry Clinton arrived at Philadelphia with orders to relieve Howe, and the following day the event was known in the quiet retreat of Valley Forge. In the city on the Delaware there ensued an immediate stir, for the admirers of Howe determined to send away their late commander in a blaze of glory, and commenced elaborate preparations for the event. Mrs. Thomson often told of the doings, including the gorgeous decoration of the Wharton mansion near the Swedes' church. At half past four of the afternoon of the eighteenth a regatta started from Knight's wharf near Vine Street, consisting of galleys and flat boats handsomely embellished with flags and decorative stuffs, containing high officers and representative Philadelphia beauties. The river was full of boats, and these would have seriously interfered with the performance had not official barges warned them to keep at a distance. Multitudes upon the shores witnessed the river parade; and the men-of-war, at anchor in the stream, literally covered with flags and streamers, saluted the regatta with numerous sulphurous discharges.

The shore pageant was quite magnificent in the eyes of the spectators, and illustrated Captain André's spectacular ingenuity. This part of the "Mischianza," or "Medley," exhausted the resources

of the occasion. A grand avenue lined with troops and bounded by two triumphal arches invited the Howes to advance; and the admiral and the general marched at the head of their coterie, attended by the "Knights of the Blended Rose," and those of the "Burning Mountain," while maidens arrayed in Turkish habit smiled upon their squires.

A tournament followed, in which the knights strove desperately with swords and spears and pistols; but in the nick of danger they were commanded by their fair ladies to desist, whereupon to merry music they gayly marched to the garden of the mansion and the hall of entertainment, and amid festoonings and flowers, and flashing reflections from nearly a hundred mirrors, they ate and drank until ten, when fireworks illumined the sky. At midnight a saloon, splendidly adorned, received the favored guests possessing cards of admission, which were graven with a vignette inclosing a shield that displayed the setting sun, and banners and other insignia of war. Black slaves in Oriental dresses, wearing silver collars and bracelets, ministered to the wants of the company, who feasted amid harmonious strains of music, and afterward danced until the dawn.

Mr. Heinrich Kichenheim, like another Lazarus, ate the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. He must have enjoyed them exceedingly, for he smacked his lips decidedly more than once during the evening. Then, strange to say, instead of lingering about the kitchen where he was so well fed, he industriously set forth with his pack for the sparsely

settled rural region along the Schuylkill. By morning he was far on his way.

This time, however, he did not tarry long at the few houses that claimed his attention, but showed an unusual desire to make headway in his journey. When not under the direct observation of anyone the peddler straightened up under his load as though it were but light, and hastened onward at high speed; in truth, an examination of the pack would have disclosed the fact that its contents were exceedingly bulky but remarkably lacking in weight.

When at a fair distance from the British environs Heinrich did not call anywhere, but marched rapidly over the neutral ground, until he entered the American lines at Rebel Hill or slightly beyond. The sentinels jested with him about the hurry that characterized him, merely to gain a few dollars; and circumstances seemed to warrant their gibes, for he was profusely perspiring, the day being of an ordinary summer temperature.

Perhaps the quality of goods in the well-worn pack was unusually fine; for the peddler made his way up the Gulph road to the general headquarters and insisted with the guard upon showing his stock to his Excellency. But the real wonder was that the grave chieftain was willing to examine the fabrics. The guard thought, a half hour afterward, when the peddler withdrew, that his eloquence had been expended in vain, for the pack had not visibly shrunk in size as the result of the interview. But he forgot the peddler entirely in his surprise at the subsequent appearance of a squad under the com-

mand of Colonel Hamilton, accompanied by an aid in civilian dress, that marched resolutely out along the creek.

It was obvious from the manner of the party that something of importance was on foot, but the curiosity of the guard was not gratified by the discovery of its purpose. When they arrived at the site of the burnt forge the colonel halted his men and divided them into two parties, instructing those of one division to be subject to the orders of his aid and to render implicit obedience. The rest proceeded with him up the path in the direction of Havard Brown's, while the civilian led his men up the steep ravine to the west of the creek, and over Mount Misery. The first detachment worked its way across the country at fair speed, notwithstanding the frequent bits of woodland and marsh that it encountered, until it arrived at a farmhouse nestling in a dell on the banks of Valley Creek, a mile or less above the house occupied by General Lafayette. Not quite so soon, possibly, and yet but little behind these, arrived their companions in arms who took the hill route, but these tarried in the timber without disclosing their presence except by a secret sign to Colonel Hamilton.

The house, which was that of David Havard, a second cousin to Havard Brown, served as headquarters for General Charles Lee, and was also tenanted by Thomas Bradford, of the commissary department. The general was quite surprised at an afternoon call of such a character, and his wonder increased when he was informed of the object of the



visit. By his permission Colonel Hamilton made a strict search of the house, but without satisfactory result, and then turned his attention to the barn. The most careful investigation failed to develop any discovery of moment, although a dark corner of the mow, situated under the eaves, and unlikely to be disturbed by the farmer's man, looked as though it had recently afforded a retreat for somebody. All the outbuildings were likewise examined without success, and the colonel was about to vent his disappointment in a grumble or two about the lack of accuracy upon the part of "these civilians," when a shout from one of his men drew him to the spring-house.

Private Andrew Gardiner was perfectly acquainted with the well-watered farm that lay so snugly beneath the North Valley Hill, and many a draught had he obtained from the never-failing spring that supplied the farmer's kitchen. The day was warm, as we have shown; and Gardiner, being athirst, stepped familiarly into the little stone structure that inclosed the spring, and dipped a cup into the pellucid pool at his feet. Again and again did he quaff the cool water, ruminating the meanwhile upon his early days and his associations with the farm. For a few moments he sat upon the stone at the door, looking around at the rough whitewashed walls, when, letting his gaze rest upon the overhanging shelf, he thought he observed a peculiar reflection coming through a wide crack between two boards.

Perhaps the average man would not have given heed to the circumstance, but Andrew Gardiner was

to teach in years to come in the "Eagle" schoolhouse, where he was accustomed to illustrate to his various classes the value of an observant habit by the events which succeeded. The recollection of the errand upon which the detachment was engaged may have keyed his curiosity, but at all events he determined to examine into the circumstance more closely. It might have been a bit of glass or glazed ware that sent back some tiny beams of light that the sun flashed into the little stone house, and which were reflected by the pool, but it was not; for when Gardiner rose to his feet and looked still closer at the phenomenon it ceased, and a human eye—the secondary mirror—that quite comprehended the purpose, although not understanding the occasion, reported to a wily brain the imminent danger that had already been observed and thus far ingeniously avoided. Then a human form dropped down upon Gardiner with such energy, unexpected as the assault was, that the soldier could only snatch at the obtruder and cry out, while the very person of whom the party was in search broke away abruptly and ran for the forest.

Hamilton and his band comprehended all that was necessary when they saw the fugitive, and they hastened after him. But fear lent wings to the hunted man, and he sped through the Valley Creek well in advance of his pursuers. The colonel did not seem willing to order a fire upon his person, but directed one of his men to discharge his piece in the air, while the remainder kept up the pursuit.

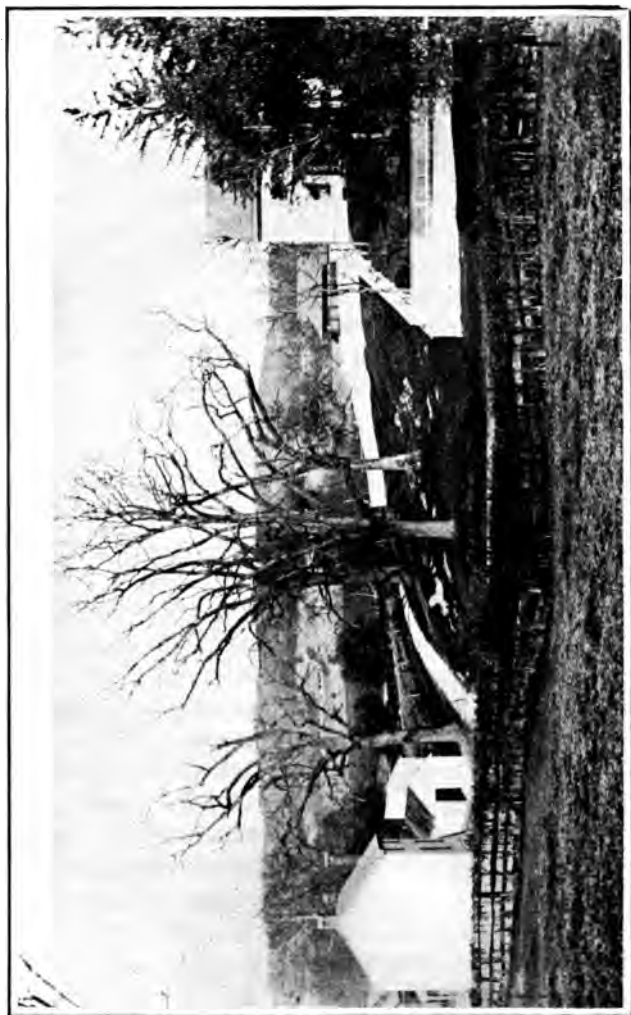
The friendly shade of the forest was now

extended to the panting stranger, who fled from Hamilton and his followers. He wondered why more shots were not fired, and congratulated him on his escape from a bullet, while yet he shuddered at a dark reason that suggested itself. But at all he ran, and had just scaled the last fence that bounded the farm on the north, with a growing feeling of exultation at the prospect of evading capture when right in his path uprose several uniformed men, who quietly surrounded him; and he fell, half ran into the arms of a civilian, whom he recognized at the same instant that his own features impressed themselves upon his captives' brain.

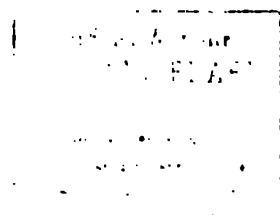
"I'm sorry," said Colonel Dewees, for it was he who had led the second detachment, "but it is my duty to arrest you."

The prisoner was ashy pale, for he now comprehended why he was not fired upon; and he did not even deem it advisable to ask the reason for his apprehension. He perceived the futility of any further attempt at escape, and walked on quietly but not until Hamilton had made sure of him with manacles. Then, indeed, did he inquire the meaning of such harsh usage, to which Hamilton responded not unkindly, but solemnly, and in tones that carried no hope to the prisoner, "Because you are charged with being a spy."

The squad returned past Havard Brown and the young farmer, observing that something extraordinary was transpiring, scrutinized the group. The prisoner bowed his head as he passed.



WHERE THE SPY WAS CAUGHT



Havard, but the latter saw with awe that the shackled man was Will Tryon!

The hiding place of this misguided man, and persistent Tory spy, was the crumb that the peddler picked up under the table of the Mischianza. The itinerant merchant, like some of his fellow tradesmen, was in the Continental service, and ran an enormous risk in the prosecution of his patriotic duty. He had been on the track of Tryon for several months, and had furnished information upon which Dewees had nearly caught the elusive spy; and his haste after the famous Medley was due to his desire to secure the fellow before he could vacate the hiding place he had just been reliably informed he was occupying. Yet it was the merest accident that brought him to bay.

A court-martial was promptly held. The evidence was overwhelming, and within twenty-four hours a primitive and grim scaffold erected under a tree near the Artillery Park told the gloomy story of military reprisal, while a little later a human body was buried in a lonely spot near by, apart from the unmarked graves of the gallant men who had given their lives for their country in succumbing to disease.

It was whispered that British dominion in the City of Brotherly Love was drawing to a close. The signs of approaching evacuation were growing positive and numerous. Foraging parties went hither and thither between the Delaware and the Schuylkill; a party dispatched up the Delaware burned a large number of small ships; stores were

captured and loss of life inflicted. Washington determined to be upon the alert for whatever favorable opportunity might offer, and ordered the youthful Lafayette to cross the Schuylkill with a force of some two thousand troops and five cannon. The very day of the Mischianza the marquis led his little army to Barren Hill, and encamped about Saint Peter's Lutheran Church—a fortress in itself—and stationed his artillery on the adjacent elevations.

But it was at the house of a recreant citizen that Lafayette established his headquarters, and this Tory immediately caused Clinton to be informed of the movement. The next night five thousand choicest troops under Grant and Erskine marched toward Frankford, turned to the left through White Marsh and passed to the Swedes' Ford in the rear of the Americans; while Grey led a strong force across the river, and halted some distance below a point opposite Barren Hill, and Clinton marched another part of his army through Germantown to attack Lafayette in front.

It required brilliant maneuvering upon the part of the marquis to avoid the toils of the enemy, but his strategy and the gallant McLane's vigilance and energy ensured success. Lafayette was arranging with a young lady of the neighborhood to go to Philadelphia to procure information while visiting her friends, when an intimation of the presence of scarlet uniforms in the woods near White Marsh was brought to him. He perceived the danger of being surrounded, for the road by which he had come from Valley Forge was already in the posses-

sion of the enemy. To deceive them for a while, until he could hurry his troops to Matson's Ford, was now his object; and he conducted the retreat with such skill that he escaped to the other side with a loss of fewer than a dozen men, in the skirmish that ensued at the river.

High on the hills above the Forge stood Washington, anxiously awaiting developments. Barren Hill was in full view a dozen miles away, and the alarm guns of the morning had made him expectant. Great was his joy when his young companion in arms marched his men safely into camp, while the cheers of the soldiers in generous greeting to their imperiled comrades were hearty and prolonged.

Residence upon the heights bordering upon the Schuylkill was pleasant enough now for those who had suffered so keenly during the winter; yet there was a quiver of expectancy in the camp after Lafayette's encounter with Clinton. The days were too precious to be wasted, and still the British general seemed in no haste to be gone. Washington was prepared to harass him, if nothing more, upon his venturing out of his well-fortified camp, and anxiously awaited the opportunity. The countryside partook in some degree of the feeling of the army, and all looked forward to the results which might be anticipated from the alliance with France.

The weeks passed slowly under such nervous tension, and June came and dispensed its benedictions. The early fruits gladdened the hearts of housekeepers, while the meadows and grainfields cheered the men of the Valley with prospects of an abun-



dance of hay and cereals. Havard Brown, who had been busied in May preparing his corn ground, saw with satisfaction the growth of the thrifty shoots. His mother noted this awaking interest, and was glad; for she perceived that nature's remedies for minds diseased were beginning to slowly assert themselves.

It was a great day in the Valley when, suddenly, the tents of the Continentals were struck, and Washington's refreshed and reinforced host marched forth to active duty. Clinton had succeeded in concealing his plans, and it was not until he had actually crossed the Delaware at Gloucester that the patriot commander comprehended his destination. The British general had contemplated going to New York by sea, but, recollecting Washington's swift movements in the past, and fearing that that strategist might anticipate him and capture the future metropolis, he marched his men across the Jerseys.

It was the eighteenth of June when the movement began, and as the vanguard crossed the river before dawn the rearguard was safe upon the eastern shore by ten o'clock; so the same night saw Clinton's men encamped at Haddonfield.

The news was not long in spreading to Valley Forge. A cool-headed patriot residing in the Quaker City shouted the tidings across the Schuylkill, that there might be no delay, and George Roberts galloped to the Forge with the welcome message. At once the Continentals commenced their march across Sullivan's bridge. Benedict Arnold, still suffering from his Saratoga wound, was

assigned to the command of the division that entered Philadelphia, while the main body marched rapidly toward the Delaware at a more northerly point. Greene and Wayne led the van, while the remainder followed in two days.

It seemed incredible to their citizen neighbors that the army had removed, but the hills so long tenanted by the suffering soldiers were absolutely deserted.

The earthworks and the huts remained intact, but the big guns were wanting. Perhaps the departure of the soldiers was realized most in those households from which the general officers had gone. Few indeed were the homes, within a radius of two or three miles, that had not entertained official guests. The majority of the latter were of high character and agreeable manners, conferring social benefits; still, it would have been unnatural if this involuntary entertainment had not been regarded as irksome, and the company an incubus; and there was an unequivocal and universal sigh of relief when the army crossed the Schuylkill, and hastened after its opponent on its way to New York.

As General Knox had been anticipating for weeks the hour of removal, his effects were in order for instant departure. His parting remarks as well as those of Mrs. Knox, were appreciative of the many kindnesses of the Browns; and the soldier's lady presented the widow with acceptable souvenirs. Then, with feeling farewells upon the part of both hosts and guests, the latter quickly passed from view.

## CHAPTER XXII

### 'AN OVERFLOWING CUP.

ON the afternoon of Friday, the day after the evacuation of the encampment, Mrs. Brown was busied with the re-arrangement of furniture in the rooms so long used by General and Mrs. Knox. The apartments had suffered somewhat in appearance by the removal of their temporary occupants, for Mrs. Knox's fine taste had led her to make the best of the meager furnishings that army life permitted.

Havard had gone down to the creekside, to wash some wagon wheels, and had chosen a spot beneath a large willow, whose shade was grateful. Absorbed in his work, he did not observe the approach of anyone, and was startled by and by to find a mounted visitor in front of him. It was Mr. Jones's helper, Freeman.

Havard was struck with his melancholy appearance. The young man said nothing for a moment, but looked so sad that Havard inquired if anything were wrong. A tear stood in his eye, and it was several moments before Freeman could say, "Yes, Massa Brown, dere's a good deal de matter. Poor Missie Frances am bery sick, 'n I swan I don' expect' dat she'll eber get well 'gain. She done send me to tell yo' she lake for to see yo' dis a'ternoon, 'n for yo' to come ober wid me. But Missus Jones, she

tell me not to wait for yo' ; but to come right home, 'n for yo' to come soon's yo' can git 'way."

A sense of a new impending calamity was upon Havard. Ever afterward he had an impression as of a sudden eclipse of the sun—the darkening, at least, of his mental sky. It was a crushing blow ; for the message, combined with the extraordinary manner of the messenger, hinted the very worst. He could only stammer that he would go over at once, and then he turned away toward the house. He felt physically weak while climbing the slope that intervened, and his mother was amazed at the pallor of his face when she met him on the porch. He could scarcely control himself to inform her of the overwhelming tidings, which affected her almost as much as himself ; and then, telling her that he would go to see Frances without delay, he hastened up the stairs to make some slight changes in his dress.

Saladin may have wondered at the manner of his master that afternoon. He was accustomed to his rider's moods, and Havard fancied that the intelligent beast even sympathized with them. But Saladin had never borne his master in just such a tumult of feeling. The latter now saw only a little stone house beneath the South Valley Hill, and a face of wondrous fairness and sweetness ; and he actually urged his good steed to greater effort, as he sped by the side of the stream and up the hill toward the Swedes' Ford road.

Freeman had preceded Havard but a few minutes, and had accomplished little more than to report his reply before Saladin's lathered form showed at the

barnyard gate, when the boy was sent to care for the faithful animal, and Mrs. Jones met Havard at the door of the house. The young man noticed how careworn and frightened she appeared as she drew him into a chair and pointing upward whispered, "She's very low!" Then overcome with grief, she buried her head in her apron.

The strain upon Havard's heart was too great to permit the relief of tears. He did not attempt to speak, but helplessly awaited Mrs. Jones's fuller communication. Anticipating the inquiries he would have made, she presently managed to tell him in broken sentences that Frances had been unwell for several weeks—she did not say since her return from waiting upon Ethel; she delicately forbore to wound him by such an allusion—but that a collapse had taken place unexpectedly, within the last day or two, so alarming to them all that they did not need the doctor's guarded intimation that it might prove fatal.

Mrs. Jones further explained that Frances had been lying very weak, but free from pain, since her breakdown, and that she had expressed a wish to have Havard come over and see her. "I'm so glad you've come, Havard; I'm sure it will do her good. I think she's dreaming of the old days when you were children together; for she smiles sometimes, and says she was so happy. You had better go up now—she's not asleep. Just go through the room overhead to the front one that looks out on the orchard. I'll not go up till I can steady myself a little—O, it's too hard, too hard!"

Havard softly ascended the steps, and gently rapped at the door leading into Frances's room. "Come in," said a voice that made his heart chords vibrate, though it was exerted very feebly. He stepped into the room, and, turning to the left saw Frances resting on her pillow, while her hand lay helpless on the counterpane. Her face was indescribably pale, but it seemed to shine with a celestial light, and a faint smile played about the clear eyes that had so often haunted him.

It was a mercy that the fountain of tears in the strong man's head was unsealed at last. It seemed as though his heart would burst under the strain, but drops of relief flowed freely as he took the wasted hand in his own large brown ones, and pressed it convulsively, as though he would grind it to powder. It was a moment of revelation to him; the old-time affection, deeper seated than ever he had understood, beginning in the intimacy of childhood and expanding with the years, and yet strangely obscured for a season before its full import was comprehended by him, was coming over him as a flood; and, yielding to the passionate impulse of the moment—the more vehement because of its utter hopelessness—he carried the hand to his lips and kissed it again and again. Frances was too weak to resist, yet Havard remembered gratefully that he did not notice even a feeble negative effort upon her part.

It was at a climax of his emotion that, unable to restrain himself any longer, he sank upon his knees, and, still clasping the member so dear to him, sob-

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bingly exclaimed, amid a rain of tears, "O, Frances, I have always loved you; but not until now have I known how much!"

Intensity of utterance was gone from Frances, but the womanly heart felt at the full this spontaneous though long-delayed avowal of affection, and her eyes were moist with an expression of tenderness and love that Havard rightly interpreted.

Under the pressure of varying emotions, he said no more for a few moments, when the silence was broken by Frances, who said in staccato, and in a tone so low that it seemed but an echo, "I—have—always—loved—you—Havard."

What a reproach hung upon these words, he thought, though Frances could not guess it. Now he understood a thousand little things that had but faintly excited his attention; how dull he had been not to comprehend them before, and in season! Yes, far back in childhood the little tokens of affection had been manifested; and this noble girl, beloved and cherished by all who knew her, might have been—nay, was—his; and yet he had been as blind as a bat!

A more delicate occasion could not be conceived. Havard's devotion to the past was flawless, and had he not believed that the atmosphere of the invisible country was fast settling about Frances his confession would not have been made. And she, believing that her feet were already laved by the water of the dark river, did not hesitate to receive a declaration that brought balm and peace even in the valley of the shadow of death.

Everything about the room was indelibly photographed upon Havard's memory. It was a little apartment, unceiled, and the bare beams almost grazed his head as he stood erect. One small window looked out upon the yard, and beyond this to the south was a fine orchard stretching toward the South Valley Hill, whose slope and summit were crowded with chestnut trees. The window was open, for the day was warm; yet a pleasant breeze toyed with the curtains.

Poor Havard! The fragrance that penetrated the apartment from the exterior, the little articles collected on the bureau, the clear bright mirror above the washstand, the simple color-prints on the spotlessly white wall—all disappeared from his view for a moment as Frances resumed, "It—is a comfort—to think that—you—will—remember—me—Havard—when I'm—gone."

But while it was crushing to be reminded of her approaching death, there was a sweetness in the remark that transformed it into a benediction; and an ineffable peace stole over the face of the gentle girl in whom the tide of life seemed fast ebbing, as Havard told her of his awakening, his struggles, and his bitterness, concluding with a profession of affection that should endure through the ages.

It was several minutes before Frances spoke again; but a slight pressure of her hand convinced Havard that he had not spoken too late. After another interval she languidly pronounced the words, "Mount Airy."

"You are thinking," faltered Havard, "of our



standing up there overlooking the Valley." "Beautiful Valley," murmured Frances; "I wish that you and Ethel—and I—were up there—to get the air—and see the hills. Wouldn't we be happy?" The faintest playfulness stole over her face; then she said wearily again, "But by and by we'll hope to meet—no sickness—no weakness—no pain—happy, happy forever!"

Havard could only tremblingly kiss her hand, and fold it up as though he would never loose it more; and shortly afterward, fearing that he was exhausting her, yet hardly able to tear himself away, suggested that she go to sleep. Then, rising from his knees, he stood sobbing uncontrollably for a few moments, when he bent over the sick girl, and, managing to utter brokenly the words, "Kiss me, Frances?" touched her brow, her cheeks, and lastly her lips, with the kisses of despair. He received a response so faint that only the yearning of love could detect it; but it was enough, and in its strength he went many days and nights.

Once more he pressed that dear hand, once more he bent over the fair face, and kissed brow and cheek, and hung lingeringly upon lips that would probably never more respond; and then he tottered to the stairs.

As he descended to the kitchen Mr. Jones met him, and, putting his hand affectionately on his shoulder, expressed gratification at the call; but agitation obstructed further utterance. The young man could endure no more, and, scarcely knowing what he did, left the house.

Havard rode home physically and mentally overbalanced. It was a while before he could frame a sentence, and his mother embraced and soothed him as she was accustomed to do when he was a child. Her own grief was intense, but pity for him stimulated her to its concealment. Presently however, she extracted from his disjointed exclamations the information that Frances had not yet passed away, when he left Mrs. Jones's. This astounded her, as she had naturally inferred that all was over, but quickly as a flash of lightning illumines the sky a thought surged through her brain that perhaps could only have revealed itself to a woman's mind—a woman who had experience of the depth and power of love.

Saladin was still tied at the gate. Mrs. Brown heard his impatient taps upon the ground, and they suggested a course of action.

"Take me behind thee at once to Jones's!" she addressed Havard. He looked at her in a sort of stupefaction, but mechanically obeyed, half comprehending that his mother purposed rendering some assistance that he could not offer. Mrs. Brown tarried not for change of dress, or aught else. Saladin nobly carried his double burden at his best pace, and soon Mrs. Brown was set down at the barnyard gate of the Jones homestead. She bade Havard go home, and be of as good cheer as possible, nor to look for her until morning, and then hastened into the house.

It was a full hour before Havard saw even the faintest gleam of the light that shone upon his mother. But when it penetrated his temporarily

dulled brain it affected him as it must have affected the man with the withered hand to feel life coursing through his dry veins. Then his hopes were as fagots of pitch pine to the blaze, and a terrible anxiety for tidings possessed him. Never had he passed such a night as that which followed. If he slept he knew it not, and with earliest dawn he was astir. He could scarcely control himself to await the probable hour of his mother's return. Nor did he, for when he could wait no longer he threw the bridle upon his horse and rode over toward the Swedes' Ford road.

Whose was that form, far away, half hidden by high bushes? Could it be his mother? Havard hastened onward, Saladin responding to his master's mood. Yes, it was she, surely, and in a few moments more Havard had flung himself from the horse's back, while his wistful eyes searched her face. He saw nothing to dread there, unless it might be her own fear to tell him good news; but she determined to risk it.

"Frances is still living, Havard, and by the divine blessing will not die, I think. We must not be too sure, my boy, but I believe that we may hope."

Havard fell against the radiant woman, but reviving hope and joy did not kill him. He blessed his mother, believing that her opportune attendance upon Frances had averted the shadow; but now Mrs. Brown crowned her glad communication with the smiling words:

"It was not I who brought Frances back from the margin of the waters, but thyself, dear Havard.

Something that thee said yesterday destroyed the disease that brought her low; and if we can only contrive to build up her weak body for a few days all may yet be well."

Then the best of mothers—as Havard called her—told something of her interview with Frances, and how she found her apparently just lingering on the brink of the dark stream; how she nursed her and encouraged her, and how the faint tide of life that had almost ebbed forever had halted, and then slowly returned, at first so feebly that it could scarcely be perceived, but by-and-by so surely that Dr. John Davis, who had called this morning, expecting to find her gone, had said she was already much better, though not at all out of danger. He thought it a miracle, and could not conceive its cause, for Frances's condition was unquestionably beyond all medical relief.

Havard nervously indicated his purpose to visit Frances again, but his mother gently restrained him. "Not for a few days, Havard," she said. "Freeman is to come over and inform us of her progress, or decline, if that must be, so wait patiently. And, Havard"—her voice lowered perceptibly—"thee may pray for Frances, if thee would help her most."

So they went home together, hopeful—even happy.

Freeman brought word that very evening that Frances was noticeably improved, and each succeeding day strengthened hope. Within a week Mrs. Brown again rode over—this time alone—and when

she returned her countenance was beaming; but she said no more than that Frances was growing better fast.

It was a month before Havard saw the convalescent, and then for but a little while, when accompanying his mother. For the first time in their relationship there was a strange reserve upon the part of Frances, and a curious fluttering in the breast of Havard. It was actually a relief to the latter to have his mother present at the meeting. Yet, in view of all the remarkable features of the case, Havard would have been disconcerted by Frances's apparent coldness if he had not perceived a faint pressure of his hand, and a mantling of Frances's cheeks and brow, that belied her restrained manner.

How beautiful the Valley appeared that midsummer day as mother and son departed homeward!

With the season Frances grew in strength so rapidly that by the beginning of August she could renew a few of her daily duties with little fatigue. Occasionally she accepted Mrs. Brown's invitations to a ride, or took tea with her old friends. But Havard observed that the air of restraint never wholly vanished, and, not yet understanding the reason, nor comprehending the philosophy of a woman's affection, was troubled.

A few weeks passed, and one day Havard, having an errand at Neilley's, rode around by Peggy Hambleton's on his way home, to get the weekly mail at Squire Henny Bell's, but as he reached the Lancaster road he observed a familiar form close

to the turn of the wood road that led to Samuel Jones's.

It disappeared in a twinkling, like a phantom. Havard was irresolute for a moment—only a moment. Should he go on to the store, or turn into the woods? His quickened heart-beats decided the matter. Soon he was at the side of the light figure walking so quickly into the depths of the timber.

It was a shy, averted face, richly crimsoned, when it appeared to Havard's view. Perhaps had it not been so he would have been infinitely more embarrassed. But for once he was master of the situation. "Frances," he simply said, after their first words of greeting, "do you know what day this is?"

She seemed surprised at the question, and unable to surmise.

"It is the twelfth of September, the anniversary of the day after the battle of the Brandywine."

Now Frances understood. Vividly did she recall that last walk together, and their view of the cherished Valley.

Tactfully but courageously did Havard approach the weighty theme that lay at his heart. It is true there were awkward embarrassments to be encountered, but they were surmounted or skillfully swept aside. The trunk of a great oak was prone but a short distance from the road; somehow Havard persuaded Frances to be seated on it, while he tied Saladin to a sapling.

If it was the diplomacy of a courtier, it was also the delicacy of a lover, that brought into view the

revelations of that sacred hour when both were certain that Frances's life was flickering to extinction. Her true womanly nature shrank from the allusion, and begged to be spared it; but Havard pleaded with powers once unknown to his diffident temperament. Nor did he take any unfair advantage of Frances's avowal when an exchange of worlds seemed imminent. His plea took full cognizance of all that had preceded it, and was permeated with heartfelt sorrow and abiding penitence.

If the soft rustle of the dead leaves from the fallen oak was produced by the footfall of Ethel's peaceful spirit, the heart of the loved and lost one rejoiced to hear the tender references to her that fell from the lips of both the speakers who discoursed in such low accents. Sorrow was mingled with joy, and painful memories with chastened hopes. But the unexpected interview could have but one fruition, and it was understood that the renewed friendship should be permitted to grow onward to perfection.

There were no passers-by to be avoided, and only the angels looked down as Havard claimed the dear pledge of betrothal. He folded Frances to his heart in a tearful rapture, and kissed her until she faintly struggled to be free. But it was sweeter still to receive her answering caress, and to feel the pressure of her warm lips in response to his own ardent tokens.

It did not excite any remark when Frances returned home in Havard's company, and Mrs. Brown understood when her son put his arm about

her and tenderly kissed her. No word was spoken at that time on either side.

How events progressed through another year need not especially be recorded. When the community became aware that an old fellowship had been revived, gossip was kindly, and the trite jests passed upon second courtships were unheard. In fact, the Mrs. Grundy of that day had concluded that it was just the right thing.

It was not by chance—for Havard insisted upon it—that the wedding day fell upon the twelfth of September, 1779.

Of that happy Sabbath afternoon, in the little best room of Mrs. Mercy Jones, with doors and windows open to the sweet warm air without, the apples mellowing on the trees, the grapes on the long trellises purpling deep with the kisses of the sun, the South Valley Hill still green and glorious, the little stream dropping from its wooden spout in its transit of the yard, and the small company of intimate friends who gladly responded to the invitation to be present, it is not necessary to write at large.

It was a Quaker wedding—at least the traditions of the Society were observed, even if the participants were not in active relationship to it.

It was sweetly solemn when the bride and the groom rose to declare their vows. None of that company forgot the manly tenderness of Havard or the gentle yet firm bearing of Frances when they plighted their troth in the touching confession of the Friends. And Mr. and Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Brown seemed almost as happy as they, and con-



gratulated each other on this auspicious union of the families.

There was no bridal tour—except to Havard's home. Why should there have been? There are taller hills, and wider vales, and statelier streams than those of Chester's emerald sweep; but where love reigns hills are magnified into mountains, creeks expand into rivers, and a tranquil Valley is metamorphosed into Beulah. No more attractive home in all the land could be found for two young spirits sacredly united for life than that just without the Valley Forge gates—a lodge by the portals of Elysium.

Of the year of bliss that followed—a year of increasing love and intimacy of fellowship—the romancer has naught to narrate, save that both Havard and Frances were satisfied that Cowper's couplet of Providence,

"The bud may have a bitter taste,  
But sweet will be the flower "

was abundantly illustrated in their own experience, and that their joy was unspeakably deeper because of the trials of the past.

There is, however, one final note of importance to the reader: The twelfth of September, 1780, brought to the Brown mansion a wee maiden of singular winsomeness. How happy the father was, how tenderly he waited upon the young mother, how he crept into the room on tiptoe and listened, with his ear right at the babe's lips, to be sure that it was breathing—not even this is to figure in the tale; but one day, when "Baby Blue"—as they called her on probation

—was two weeks old, Frances introduced the subject of the babe's proper naming.

There was a strange yearning in Havard's heart concerning a cherished name whose original possessor was sleeping beneath the grassy turf of Saint Peter's. Often had he and Frances visited the spot, and lavished flowers upon it. But still he gave no sign of his desire. But Frances said, "Havard, my precious husband, gives me my way and wish in everything; yet I want one thing more—to name our 'Baby Blue.'" She let her plump hand rest upon the innocent's cheek, never so lightly, and archly continued, "Have you any objection to my doing so?" Havard looked wistful, but he promptly responded, "You have given her to me, Frances dear, you shall give her to me name and all."

"Then," said Frances, "in memory of our lost one I name her 'Ethel.'"

"Baby Blue," at this abrupt transition in her nomenclature, sputtered a little, as babies will; whereupon her father, both tearful and triumphant, seized her and pressed her to his bosom; and when Frances declared that his unshaven chin would rasp the little thing's velvet cheek he turned upon the mother with a caress of such emphasis that the joyous invalid was obliged to ask him to desist.

But Havard's cup was full at last—even to overflowing!

THE END











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